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Reminiscences of Morris Steinert

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*John P. ...*













M. STEINERT.

(*Frontispiece.*)

REMINISCENCES  
OF  
MORRIS STEINERT

COMPILED AND ARRANGED

BY

JANE MARLIN

ILLUSTRATED

G. P. PUTNAM'S 'SONS  
NEW YORK AND LONDON  
The Knickerbocker Press

1900

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BY  
MORRIS STEINERT

The Knickerbocker Press, New York

TO MY BELOVED WIFE  
CAROLINE DREYFUSS STEINERT  
WHO STILL LIVES  
ENSHRINED IN THE HEARTS OF HER HUSBAND  
AND CHILDREN  
THESE REMINISCENCES ARE DEDICATED

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## INTRODUCTION

**I**N presenting this volume to the public I intrust its success to the fact that its story is not taken from the unlimited and fanciful realms of fiction, but, on the contrary, from the practical and well-worn paths of the daily life that guide and influence the human family. It is the realistic which forms the subject of my venture, the unusual events that found their mainspring in my birth, surroundings, and education, and which should lend to this little book the charm, if any, of such quaintness as may be partially found in the fanciful. Its central force, however, lies in the very diminutiveness of the beginning, and the moral which teaches us to magnify to advantage the small forces and to utilize them to a grander and more beneficent purpose. It also aims to teach us how to accept all influences, whether good or evil, in a spirit of humbleness, and to train our hearts and minds to enjoy what we have, and to be happy at any cost. The results obtained in following this philosophy of life will harden men to withstand the daily encounters, to overcome them, and to derive such strength as will lead them to broader and more successful pursuits in life.



In relating my experiences during a life which covers nearly threescore and ten years, and which, in view of the aforesaid, has offered many interesting and varied incidents I have tried to sift out the best of them for the benefit of my readers.

There is also an additional interest connected with my lines which lies in and is taken from a hidden world and lives in music. My early love for the divine art has been my talisman through all of my struggles and successes. The power of music, its wholesome influence, and the charm which it lends to the human heart, were early recognized by me, and whatever of the material surrounded me, it has always been subject to music's infallible truth. Without this spiritual guidance my life would have been wretched, while on the contrary it has been to me an Eden. That is the reason why my *leit motif* in this book is to be found in music, and that all the things which radiate from it are but so many satellites to its luminous power.

This volume would never have made its appearance but for the urgent solicitation of my esteemed friend, Mrs. Marlin, to whom I have dictated these reminiscences, and who has compiled and arranged them in their present form.





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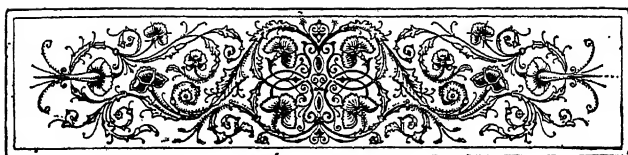
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## REMINISCENCES





# REMINISCENCES

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## CHAPTER I

Scheinfeld—Coblenz—Bad-Ems—Dazian—Kleinschrod

IN the little town called Scheinfeld, which is situated in the Kingdom of Bavaria, Germany, I am told that I was born on the 9th of March, 1831. I have not yet found out whether it was a mild or stormy day when my good mother gave me birth, nor have I ever inquired concerning the history of that day, as to whether there was anything important connected with the incident, but judging from the phlegmatic nature of the townfolk, as shown by the slow state of the few people who make up the community of Scheinfeld, it must have been quite an event. My impression is also based upon the fact that, after an absence of thirty-five years from my snug little nest, when I again entered the town and looked about I found the line of houses in an undisturbed condition, holding full sway upon the land upon which they had been built some three hundred years before, their weather-worn aspect



bespeaking the solid workmanship which their builders had put into them when they entered upon their earthly mission. The crude architecture and the mediæval character given them being strongly manifest. I am forced, however, to confess that the spirit of time had made itself felt in the peaceful town, for I was told—and there was a ring of genuine pride in the statement—that during the period of my absence two new houses had been erected.

I do not know—but I wish with all my heart that I did—who the early settlers of my beloved birth-place were; how they lived, loved, prospered, and died. That they were a strong, hardy race I am sure, for their offspring seem proof against Father Time, and I was astonished when I met men still enjoying life who were actually looked upon as long past their prime when I left Scheinfeld thirty-five years before, and who manifested scarcely any surprise at seeing me again, extending the hand of good-fellowship, and taking up the thread of conversation as if we had parted but yesterday. I really began to philosophize a little as I walked among them and compared their fresh, healthy faces, their excellent appetite as shown in the enjoyment of their simple meal, their genuine pleasure over a stein of good Bavarian beer, which was to their minds unequalled even by the heavenly ambrosia and nectar of the gods. The comparison became a serious one when I recalled the faces of the people in the large cities where I had lived, and I concluded that perhaps, after all, it were better to go back to the humble town where the pure atmosphere and rather uneventful pursuits of life favored

health and longevity, and I could but recall Gray's lines :

“ To hie him home, at evening's close,  
To sweet repast and calm repose.  
From toil he wins his spirits light,  
From busy day the peaceful night ;  
Rich, from the very want of wealth,  
In heaven's best treasures, peace and health.”

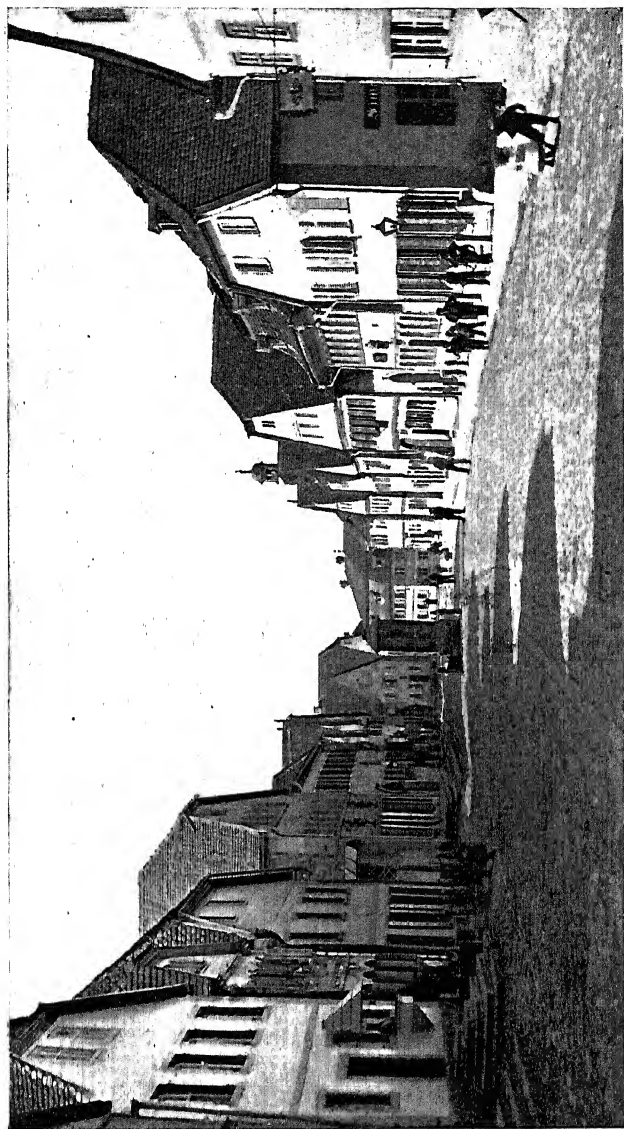
The quaint and picturesque town must have played an important part in the centuries past, for a high, continuous wall and moat still surround the place, while, from the wall, rise at equal distances three strong watch-towers, guarding the town like sentinels, each provided with big doors which used to be closed and locked every night at nine o'clock to keep all intruders out. In one of the towers there lives to-day the Stadt Musikus—town musician—whose duty it is to play at high mass every Sunday with his orchestra, and also to play chorals upon brass instruments at twelve o'clock noon, to call in the reapers from the fields for their midday meal, and in the evening to play an Ave Maria, summoning the faithful to prayer. In the second tower there formerly dwelt the herdsman of the town, whose business it was to look after all of the cows, while in the third tower resided the *Gänshirt* of the ducks and chickens.

There still exists the *Nachtwächter*, with his old lantern and horn, who calls out the hours of the night in a quaint little rhyme, after which he blows his horn. Near the market-place is the inn, a hostelry that has in its history sheltered many a distinguished

traveller, its old sign, showing a prancing white horse with the inscription *Das Weisse Ross*,—The White Horse,—creaking as it sways to and fro in the wind; while in the centre of the town is the Catholic Church, and the ringing of its matin bell every morning at four o'clock awakens the faithful not only to prayer but to work, for in Scheinfeld the townfolk are up with the lark; and at seven its melodious pealing calls the dwellers to the church for worship.

There is still standing, quite unchanged by time, the Rathhaus where justice is meted out to the wrong-doer with as much severity as in olden times,—a picturesque old building that has witnessed many comings and goings. Every morning in the market-place may be found a display of fresh vegetables offered for sale to the housekeepers,—an incident which is really the most exciting one of the whole day.

There are seven different establishments where beer is brewed and sold directly from the *fass*—and such beer as it is! It may be that it, too, adds to the longevity, but perish the thought! Then there is the schoolhouse, literally divided in two, one side for the large and the other for the small children; and, close by, the dilapidated and dingy hall where stands the antiquated fire-engine, for which water is supplied from the town pump, which pump also furnishes water for the entire community, and which is one of the centres of gossip for the female portion of the neighborhood. Here the young women meet and, as they fill their buckets with water, exchange the latest bit of news, the choicest bit of



HAUPT STRASSE VON SCHEINFELD.



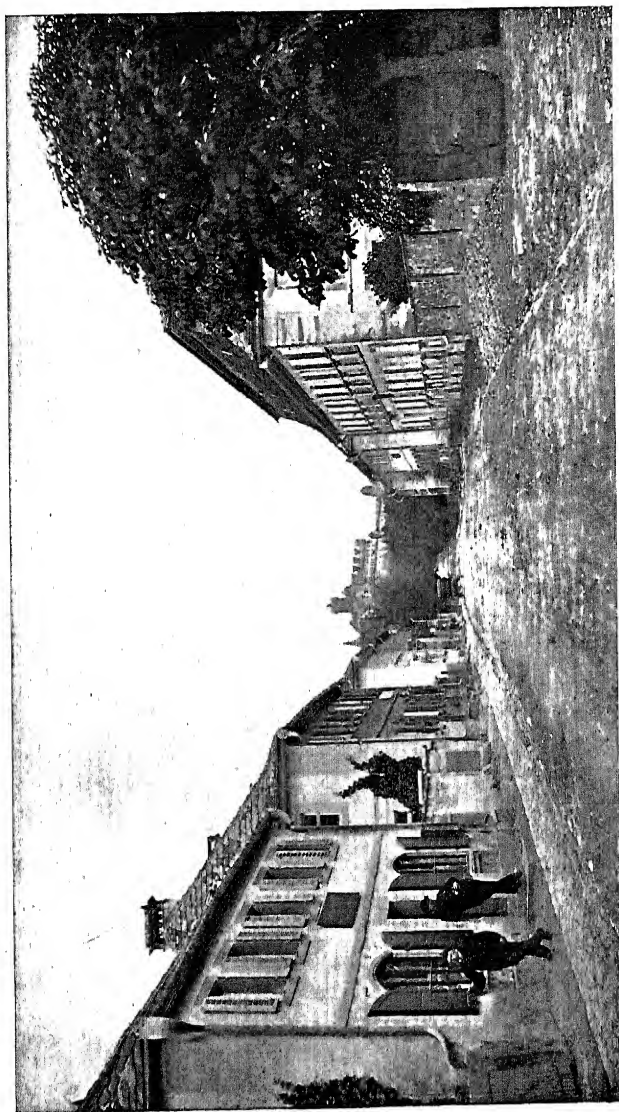
scandal. Back of the town rises the wooded hill crowned by the castle of Schwarzenberg, one of the ninety-nine castles owned by the Prince of Schwarzenberg, and connected with it is a monastery of Capuchin monks and friars. The castle, which is as strongly fortified and as impregnable as a fortress, has room enough for a whole regiment of soldiers, and houses for all of the officials whose business it is to care for the thousands of acres belonging to the vast estate, a whole community by itself, having a school of a higher grade than the one in the town. So much for a brief description of the little town of Scheinfeld, for whose quiet, restful atmosphere I daily sigh, and where I hope I may one day sleep beside my sainted mother. Scheinfeld—

“Where Resignation gently slopes away,  
And all our prospects brightening to the last,  
Our heaven commences ere the world be past.”

I was born of poor parents, and the limitations of their purse were in keeping with the early schooling which I obtained. When seven years old I was sent to the town school, and, shortly after, my father died, leaving my mother with little in the way of worldly possessions, but with a stout heart and indomitable courage, and by rigid economy I remained at school until my twelfth year. I cannot say that my mental training consisted of anything more than learning how to read, write, and spell, with perhaps a few of the primary principles of arithmetic, for the greater part of the time spent in school was devoted to studying the catechism and tenets of faith as prescribed by the Church. We were taught to rise *en*

*masse* when the priest entered the schoolroom and to cry out as a sort of welcome, "Praise be to the Lord Jesus Christ."

While very young I found inherent within me a great love for music and a longing to enter its fascinating realm, and as my family were musically inclined my yearning for this art and my desire to master it found a ready response, and my brother Louis, who is thirteen years older, noticing my inclination, immediately engaged the services of the old cantor, who was the organist of the church, to teach me the rudiments of clavier-playing, for there was not at that time a pianoforte in all Scheinfeld, but the cantor owned a clavichord upon which he gave me lessons. In teaching me he pursued a very peculiar method. He would call me into his little room where the clavichord stood, and, without bothering to teach me the printed notes, made me acquainted with the keyboard, teaching me just how to strike single notes and later on how to form chords. After I had mastered this and had some command over the keyboard, he would sit down and play some easy tune for me, requesting me to remember it, and, after repeating the air several times, I was expected to sit down and play it correctly for him, which, I assure you, I was careful to do, because, if I failed to catch and play it according to his instructions he would give me a good spanking. Often he would get up from the clavichord, saying: "I am going out for a little while, Moritz, and I shall expect you to play the tune perfectly when I return." He would take his hat, lock the door after him, and go over to the beer-keller across the street,



STREET LEADING TO CASTLE SCHWARZENBERG.





and after a few steins of cool Bavarian beer come back, saying, as he unlocked and opened the door, "Now, Moritz, I am ready; let us have the tune," and I, having, as I said before, strong reasons for complying with his request, usually managed to play the little tune correctly. Being now fortified in my musical knowledge by the severity of the old cantor's instructions, I felt equal to availing myself of the tutoring of the Stadt Musikus, who would teach me the flute and the violin, and he appeared to be a more modern teacher than the old cantor, for I had to learn how to read music. My instruction upon the guitar, for I also learned to play upon that instrument, I received from the chimney-sweep of the town, who was considered not only an artist in sweeping chimneys but also in sweeping his hands across the strings of the guitar. I owe him much for the leniency he showed me in the execution of his art. It is to be presumed that I felt myself by this time quite an expert in music, with all the advantages derived from my various teachers, and I went into the further study of it with my heart and soul. I must state here that Wagner's music was not then known, and Beethoven's compositions only known to us by name, otherwise I might have had a somewhat different opinion of my musical ability.

As I have already mentioned, there was an excellent school up at the castle on the hill, and the schoolmaster, by name Herr Schütz, was considered a fine musician, and, as he had a grand pianoforte, my brother thought it would be an excellent opportunity for me to study music with him and learn the pianoforte. His price, fortunately, was low,—only

six kreutzers; about three cents—and in keeping with my brother's pocket-book. Schütz was really a good teacher, and taught me by means of an instruction book, and in order to vary the monotony of scale-playing, of which he was most rigid, he used to write down little melodies for me, composing them during the lesson, which, as may be judged, I found an exceedingly pleasant diversion. There was only one unpleasant circumstance connected with my study with Herr Schütz, and that was that I must literally race up the hill to the castle after school, for my lesson was from three to four o'clock, and as I was not permitted to leave school one minute before the closing time, which was three, I had to run the entire distance, and I usually arrived much out of breath, but having covered the ground in remarkably quick time. One day when I was at my lesson—for Schütz was not only the schoolmaster but also the musical director of the monastery church—Padre Quartian happened in and, after listening to my playing, complimented me and told Schütz that I had great ability. As Padre Quartian was a fine musician himself, I was delighted with what he said, but more so when at the next lesson he again came in and offered to teach me ecclesiastical music such as is used in the Catholic Church. In thus getting his permission to sing at mass, I became acquainted with the monastic style of music, which differs greatly from the ordinary service of the Church. The opportunities which I enjoyed in having such musical advantages, and in listening to the organ-playing of the Padre, as well as the religious spirit that was so much a part of the

good man, will ever remain fresh in my memory. The musical services given by the orchestra, led by our Stadt Musikus, differed greatly from their usual music which they furnished for the dances of the peasantry.

When twelve years of age I was hired out to my brother-in-law, who was by trade an optician, and lived at Coblenz-on-the-Rhine. Great changes came to me when I reached that city, then boasting of but twenty thousand inhabitants, but which appeared to me, by reason of its size, to be one of the seven wonders of the world. My employer and master owned and managed a small factory where he made spectacles, microscopes, and telescopes. My occupation consisted, aside from grinding glasses,—holding the glass in one hand and turning the wheel with the other,—in making the fire in the stoves, carrying the water, running errands, and, as I belonged to the family and boarded with them, my spare hours were given over to caring for my employer's children, taking them for walks, and looking after them generally. In my strolls with the little ones I always took advantage of the daily parade where I heard the regiment band, which was a great treat to the country boy from Scheinfeld who had never in his short life listened to a good band. I must have given satisfaction to my brother-in-law as apprentice and to my sister Babetta as nursemaid, for one day she said to me: "Moritz, you are a good boy, and as your birthday is close at hand I have a great treat in store for you. Here are five silver groschen; go buy yourself a ticket which will admit you to the top gallery of the opera-house, where you will hear Auber's great opera, *La Muette de Portici*."

This act of generosity on the part of my good sister I have never forgotten, because it was the first time I beheld the interior of an opera-house and heard an orchestra and singers together. The effect upon me was simply astounding when the musicians struck the first chord of that magnificent overture; and when I heard the versified tone-coloring of that orchestra, which came from instruments which I had never seen nor heard before, I was transformed and taken away from myself, transported for the time to another sphere. The early love for the divine art of music which had been given me from above, and which had before lain dormant, awoke within me and filled me with the most profound reverence and respect, and I felt, for the first time, what a beautiful, though hidden, world lay before me which would henceforth unfold itself to my imagination. But when the curtain rose and I saw the dramatic action which was resting upon the wings of music; when the powerful chorus burst forth into song, and the action of the players spoke to my intellect; when the orchestra also spoke in words of tone,—when the voice of the soloist poured forth its pathetic and emotional lyrics; then I felt that this was indeed a happy day, and one of great rejoicing within my young heart that I had been spared to enter the enchanted realm of music. The laborious duties I had been forced to undergo, the poverty, the domestic hardships, were for the time forgotten, overbalanced by the knowledge that I had at last found a place that was so congenial to my better self as to make heaven seem close at hand, and from that hour I really enjoyed and loved my stay at Coblenz,

and would have been perfectly happy had my education, even in the elementary branches, been allowed to go on.

Day by day the thought that I was very ignorant came to me with almost overwhelming force, for I could only read, write, and spell, and do the simplest sums in arithmetic. As I had no money, for it was impossible to save anything from the pittance I received for my work, I one day got command of my courage and begged my sister to help me in this direction. I found her more than ready to grant my request, and a teacher was immediately procured, and I began to study with him. He taught me the higher branch of arithmetic, the elements of mercantile clerical work, such as bookkeeping, etc., and also a little French; and I felt that my cup of joy was full to the brim when my employer sent me to Bad-Ems where I conducted an optical establishment for him, in which I was very successful, making money from the start. Being only fifteen years old, all alone, and master of my time, I took advantage of it by leaving my shop to the care of my neighbors for an hour morning and afternoon, while I ran over to the Curpark to hear the orchestra, a band of twelve musicians from Bohemia, who played magnificently. I am afraid that my brother-in-law lost many sales by my being away from the little shop, but I am sure that I gained a great deal musically, for it was at Ems that, encouraged by members of this band, I wrote a number of pieces for orchestra, which they played in the Curpark.

Ems is a great watering-place, and the nobility from all over Europe come there yearly for the

baths, and, in consequence, artists of renown also gather there for rest or to fill engagements. It was at Ems that I met Henrietta Sontag and Jenny Lind. A little story concerning this latter famous cantatrice seems not amiss in this sketch, so I will recall it.

In the next booth to me there was a Tyrolian selling gloves. I think he was the handsomest specimen of the genus man that I ever looked upon. He was unusually tall, large, and commanding, and in his picturesque dress—for he wore the bright and attractive costume of the Tyrol—he was a perfect Apollo. One day Jenny Lind came to the little booth for gloves, and after trying on several she requested him to accompany her to her hotel, bringing along his wares that she might make her selection there. Willingly he went, although he did not know who his fair customer was. After buying a dozen pairs of gloves, Jenny Lind said, “I have heard that you people of the Tyrol are great singers; perhaps you will sing for me?” The Tyrolian, who was really a fine warbler, and greatly pleased with his singing, readily consented, and warbled away for the queen of song for half an hour. As he was leaving, and wishing not to be rude, he said, pointing to the piano, “Perhaps you will sing for me.” The beautiful woman smiled, and seating herself at the piano sang for him several of her bird songs, to hear which people all over the world paid fabulous prices. As she finished and turned around on the stool, expecting the most florid compliments, the Tyrolian stood silently before her.

“What do you think of my singing?” questioned

Jenny Lind. "Well," speaking slowly, "with the exception of my sister, I think it's the finest I ever heard." Daily did Laimbeck visit Jenny Lind, and daily did he warble for her and she for him, until the gossips of Ems wove a pretty romance out of their friendship and intimacy. While at Ems that season Jenny Lind sang for Queen Victoria, then a young woman, the guest of Frederick William IV. at Stolzenfels. I was especially interested in this private concert, for the flute player of the orchestra chosen to accompany her was a friend of mine, and together, we played duets after business hours. He was a very pompous, bombastic fellow, with a high idea of his ability as a musician, and, in speaking of the coming event, said, "I don't want to go up to Stolzenfels and play the flute with this Jenny Lind; she probably can't sing true—none of those artists ever do—and it is terrible to have them always off the key." Well, he went across to the hotel and presently I heard him begin his obligato. He played but a few measures, then there was a lull in the music, and so on for nearly an hour—a little music, then a long rest. Finally he came back much crestfallen, his conceit quite taken out of him. "Do you know, Moritz," he said, "that is a great singer? Why, I began an obligato for her, and after I had played but a few bars she stopped me, saying, 'You do not play true,' and so on during the rehearsal, until I believe that I don't know anything about the flute after all, and that I am the one who plays out of tune." Happy am I to state that my friend played for her, and the concert at Stolzenfels was a great success.



For three seasons I remained at Ems, and became a good salesman of optical goods. I could fit spectacles to the blind and those who could not see, and I made for myself quite a reputation. The knowledge gained in showing microscopes and telescopes to scientific men, and their warm words of praise made me feel my importance; and after carefully thinking the matter over I decided that I was quite old and knew enough to go in business for myself, for I was nearly eighteen, so I returned to Coblenz and told my employer that I had resolved to strike out for myself, which I did. As I had no money I went back home—Scheinfeld—and told my good brother Louis of my plan, and asked him to help me. He thought well of my suggestion, and bought for me a small line of optical instruments, and I immediately started out for a tour through Bavaria and Saxony. Unfortunately for me, the revolution of 1848 broke out at that time and threw all Germany into a state of great excitement. There was a general depression in business everywhere, and as I was especially unfortunate in visiting places where daily riots occurred and there was no money to spare, my trip was not a financial success, and I returned to Scheinfeld greatly humbled. In one of the places which I visited with my optical goods I heard a great violoncello player named Kellerman, and I fell in love with the tone of his instrument and decided to learn it at my first opportunity.

Upon reaching Scheinfeld, and having time to spare, I called upon the old Stadt Musikus, who was considered an expert in the playing of all instruments, as I did not have money enough to go to some

city and study with a competent teacher, and, relying upon the reputation and manifold talents ascribed to him by the musical people of my native town, asked him if he would teach me to play upon the violoncello. Before answering me he began to laugh, and I can see him now as he stood there in his tower-room, his robust stature and smooth-shaven, fleshy face shaking and growing more florid as he laughed, and finally exclaimed, between shrieks of laughter and with emphasis: "You fool! You want to play the 'cello? Why don't you take some instrument you can learn? The idea of a chap of your grade wanting to take lessons on the 'cello!" and he continued to double up with laughter. "I have heard a man play the 'cello magnificently, and I have full confidence in my ability to learn to play it; he learned—why should n't I?" I replied, quite crestfallen at his apparent doubt of my musical ability. He looked at me a minute, stopped laughing, and said: "Forgive me, Moritz, but the man who would play the violoncello well must not dabble with other instruments; the 'cello, my boy, is the king's instrument; it is not for one who seeks to gain a livelihood by playing it,—rather is it for one who has ample time to study it and is possessed of a true musical spirit." After listening to his tirade, I asked him whether he could play the 'cello, whereupon he straightened up and said reproachfully,—for he took my words as an insult,—"Why, I can play every instrument, and if you insist upon it I will give you lessons, and teach you all that I know." I kept him to his word, and took my first lesson then and there. Old Dazian brought out his violon-

cello, put it on a chair, and calling me to him taught me to draw the bow across the strings. As his fee was no higher than that of Schütz I could well afford to keep up my lessons, but after twelve he most respectfully told me that he could not teach me any more, as I already knew as much about the 'cello as he did. The little knowledge that I then had of that beautiful instrument was of great value to me, and I requested old Dazian to form a string quartette where I could play the 'cello part, which he did.

It is a sad thought, when one looks upon the life of a man like Dazian, who was endowed with a great musical talent, a talent which was worthy and strong enough to receive the highest cultivation, and which would have given the musical world a man of the greatest genius, that he should have been cramped by the limitations of Scheinfeld. Nature was very liberal to him, but destiny was not equally kind, and it seemed to me that what he termed his good fortune was but his misfortune. But Dazian, gifted musically as are few others, did not apparently notice the omission, but enjoyed the few blessings he had received and the opportunity that made him Stadt Musikus of Scheinfeld. To me it was a sad picture, and I have often wondered if he ever felt conscious of what he had been denied. I sincerely hope not, and that he died as supremely happy as he was in the old days when he taught me to play the violoncello. I never take up his 'cello now—for by a happy chance I was able to buy his collection of instruments complete—but that I recall his kindness and encouragement to the lonely boy in the



TOWER OF THE STADT MUSIKUS.



days when he knew what it was to suffer and to sigh for money with which to carry on the study of music, and which seemed as far off as the bags of gold which we are told hang from either end of the rainbow, and which are ours if we can but catch and hold the beautiful, fleeting thing of color.

Finding that I had plenty of unoccupied time after finishing my 'cello lessons with old Dazian, for the war put an end to my business plans, and realizing that in our little town there lived a man of the highest culture and most peculiar characteristics, a man whose sphere was totally different from that of the musical men of Scheinfeld, I resolved to seek his acquaintance; and I must not overlook the time I spent with him, for the sound philosophy he taught me has been a help and inspiration all along the rough road which I have had to travel. His name was Kleinschrod, and he must at one time have occupied a very high and prominent position in the political affairs of the Bavarian kingdom; in fact, it was quietly whispered among those who had the pleasure of his acquaintance that he once lived in a large city, where he meted out justice in the capacity of a judge.

He was fearless and righteous, a man of democratic and liberal ideas, and endowed with rare qualities in his profession of jurisprudence, and because of his views, which were antagonistic to the then existing régime, which was divided between the Church and the Crown, he was in exile in the little town of Scheinfeld. He probably gave strong impulse to the rebellion of '48, for he was a man who would not acknowledge the divine right

of kings, and was especially opposed to Louis I., who, in view of his love for art, overloaded the kingdom with expensive buildings, art collections, monuments, etc. At that time, and even before the revolution, the most outrageous scenes were enacted, brought about by Louis's mad passion for Lola Montez, whose stay in Munich is memorable, and who, on account of her unlimited charms, succeeded in leading the poetical-minded King into eccentricities that worked fatally in court circles and created scandals not to be tolerated, and which finally resulted in the abdication of the King from the throne. The conduct of Lola Montez at that time, in her position as paramour to Louis I., strongly suggests the régime of Mme. de Maintenon and Louis XIV. Kleinschrod must have uttered some strong sentiments against the monarch and his adherents, and that was probably the reason why he was dismissed from his high position; and even when deprived of his office he was forbidden to practice law in the kingdom.

Being thus cut off from gaining a livelihood in this direction, he settled in Scheinfeld, and in a secret way served the peasantry as counsellor at law, picking up quite a little money, for the peasantry of that section were always at swords' points and had no legal adviser, though my father, while he lived, filled the position, giving them sound, wholesome advice gratis. I felt, and naturally, much sympathy for Kleinschrod, for I had gathered enough experience during my youthful travels to enable me to discriminate between men of ordinary minds and the few who really possessed

superior intellect,—those who stood out boldly as men of strong character, and those who had no mind of their own. It was this that made me seek the acquaintance of this remarkable man; partly, as I said before, from sympathy for him in his exile, but principally to study with him and to learn from him some of his rare qualifications. He was not a man who could be easily approached, and it took me some time to muster up enough courage to call upon him.

Kleinschrod was a bachelor of advanced years, a man of heavy stature, strong features, and dark, piercing eyes which expressed a world of passion. Like many great men of his time he was clean shaven, his complexion being sallow, while his mouth, with its thin, straight lips, showed the cynicism of the man of the world and at times the placid look of a monk. His office was simply a small room with an equally small bedchamber, and the four walls of the office were bare of any decoration. He could not have been a strong adherent of his Church, for the customary crucifix with the small font for holy water—never missing in the house of a believer—was absent; while the furniture consisted of a plain pine table, one three-legged stool, and a rough wooden bench close to the wall. The bare floor was strewn with clean white sand, and a wooden jug in one corner held the fresh water from the town pump. I must confess that I felt rather weak-hearted when I knocked at the door of the office of this peculiar man, for I had a predilection of his austerity, and I feared that the suavity which I had acquired at Ems would be of little use to me,



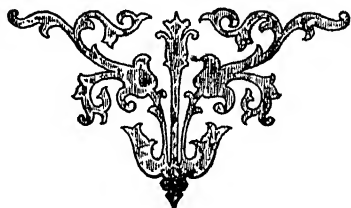
and my heart thumped violently against my vest when in answer to my knock he called out in a rather gruff voice, "*Herein.*" I opened the door with trembling hand and haltingly stepped into the room.

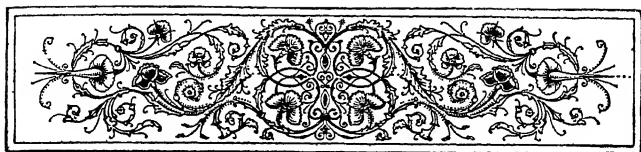
As I approached and stood before him all of my fears increased, and the neat little speech which I had prepared went like a flash from my mind, and left me there a frightened, stammering lad. I was again the poor Scheinfeld boy, all my acquired learning having vanished. Kleinschrod understood my awkwardness immediately, and it was my good fortune that when I was speechless and in despair he arose and coming to me offered his hand, and with his cynical but fascinating smile, said, "*Grüss Gott.*" His voice, so musical and full of pathos, gave me command of myself at once, and with it came the assurance that I was not only in the presence of a great man, but one that was full of sentiment and remarkable goodness. He questioned me closely concerning myself, whether I was in trouble, and with evident astonishment remarked that it seemed strange that a youth of my years needed his services. I hastened to assure him, in a joking way, that I was not in trouble and that I was not looking for any, which latter remark seemed to incline him more favorably towards me, and he said, with that cynical smile, that it had been his experience that a man had not to seek trouble; that it was given to him gratuitously and in far greater proportion than happiness. As he talked his expressive face lighted up, his sallow skin reddened, and his eyes sparkled under the strong emotions which surged through him. I stood entranced, when suddenly

he changed the conversation, seized his long pipe, filled it from a tobacco-jar on the table, and lighting it with a taper blew out a cloud of smoke which hid his face for a moment; when it passed away and he looked at me again he was the stern advocate, and he at once repeated his question, "What can I do for you, my friend?" To which I replied that I had called to see if it were possible for me to study with him, and to pay in part for my instruction by working as his amanuensis. He immediately said that he would be more than willing to help me,—and it was a great day for me when I entered his office and began my study and work under his guidance.

I served him for several months, and found that the briefs which I was called upon to write were of great benefit to me, for his diction was beautiful. Together we carefully read many of the German classics, such as Herder, Wieland, Klopstock, Richter, and the philosophical doctrine of Kant, and from his comments I gathered many precious pearls of thought which have been guiding stars in my later years. His views on political economy, on statesmanship, on the ethics of life—how to live, how to suffer, how to enjoy life, and, finally, how to die—have been invaluable. These thoughts, which came spontaneously, were imbued with the power of a Socrates. Kleinschrod was very poor, and the little money I was able to pay him from time to time from my limited resources, was so thankfully received that I could but look upon it as a deed of charity. I have dwelt at length upon my association with this remarkable man because

the days spent with him have been of great help to me all along the stony path to success, and are, even now, when I have tasted the joys of prosperity, food for thought as I doze before my cheerful grate fire on a chilly winter's night. Kleinschrod, —the remembrance of whose life never fades, Kleinschrod, who opened for me two beautiful flowers,— Confidence and Hope.





## CHAPTER II

Switzerland—Berlin—Journey by Sleigh into Russia—Chavli—Riga

BECOMING weary of my enforced idleness, I resolved to try my fortune in Switzerland, and one day I set out with my case of optical goods for St. Gall and the land of eternal snow. St. Gall is the capital of the canton, and one of the largest business centres of Switzerland. The ancient walls and moat, the Benedictine Abbey, founded by St. Gallus, an Irish monk, and at one time one of the greatest seats of learning in Switzerland, and having a wonderful library, I found most interesting, and, while I did not grow rich, I managed to more than pay my way.

From St. Gall I went to Chur, for I had made up my mind to pay a visit to the famous Engadine Thal, believing that at St. Moritz and Pontresina I could do quite a profitable business with the invalids forced to go there for the winter months. Chur is delightfully situated on the banks of the Plessur in the Rhine valley, and there my sales were excellent. From Chur I went to Silvaplana by the Julier Pass, in company with a teamster who was carting an immense cask of wine across the pass to the town. He

sat on one end of the long sled and drove, while I, with my satchel and case of optical goods, rode on the other. When we were thirsty, as we often were, he used to take out the bung of the cask, insert a couple of tubes, and together we would pull away at the wine. The trip was most interesting, for the view of the snow mountains of the Bernina was magnificent, and, lower down, the whole valley of the Upper Engadine from St. Moritz to Sils lay stretched out before us, and we had an exciting run-away down the winding descent.

From Silvaplana I went to St. Moritz, a charming village on Lake St. Moritz, and one of the most frequented and favorite resorts of the Engadine, the water being considered very beneficial for consumption and stomachic complaints. My business at St. Moritz was not all that I could desire, but I had a capital time with a jolly party of young people whom I met, and borrowing a guitar we went serenading nightly and frolicking generally. After a stay of two weeks I went to Samaden, the largest village in the Engadine, where the château of the old Engadine families of Sali and La Planta is located. These families have taken a prominent part in the history of the canton for the past ten centuries. At Samaden I remained some time, meeting many pleasant people, and one day I attended a wedding. After the festivities were over, and the bride and groom ready to start for the groom's home, a little town up the mountain called Ponte, several of the guests in double sleighs set out to accompany them. When about half-way there, the bride and groom and the next two sleighs were

buried by an avalanche of snow, and I only escaped death by being in the last team. The sadness of that event quite spoiled the Engadine for me, and after a visit to Pontresina, where I was entertained by a wealthy chocolate manufacturer named Jost, at his beautiful house just out of the village, I left for Churwalden, and from Churwalden went back to Chur.

Thinking that, as long as I was in Switzerland, I might as well see some of the large cities, I went to Zurich, where I spent a month very profitably. From Zurich I travelled to Zug and Lucerne, then to Berne by the Emmenthal, then on to Bienne, Basle, Schaffhausen, and finally back to St. Gall, where I decided to go home, for there I received a letter from my brother-in-law and former employer at Coblenz, stating that he was about to start on a journey through Germany and Russia, his mission being twofold,—for he was to lecture and exhibit the telegraph, together with electricity in its application to telegraphy, and to show and sell optical goods. He begged me to accompany him as his assistant, and as he was more liberal in his offer than when I worked for him at Coblenz I resolved to return home and go with him. Accordingly, I set out for Scheinfeld, and in a few weeks joined him at Coblenz, and we started on our eventful journey,—I with a feeling of deep joy that I was to see something of the world, and have the opportunity of hearing great musical artists, for while I had heard considerable music in the small cities I had visited, and such operatic performances as were in the reach of those places, I had never enjoyed the privilege

of hearing grand opera in the residential cities of Europe, nor had I ever heard large orchestral performances.

The study of Beethoven's works was in its infancy, while Mendelssohn was hardly known. Berlioz had just completed a triumphal journey through Germany, introducing his grand compositions, but Liszt's orchestral works and greater vocal scores were still lying in the cradle. Schubert and Schumann were considered extremists, and the good public of Germany revelled in sweet repose, comfortable in the possession of the works of Haydn and Mozart. It is true that Paganini's work was over, and that his tremendous execution upon the violin stood boldly out upon the horizon of virtuosity; that De Bériot, Spohr, Ernst, and Vieuxtemps, were well known among those deeply interested in violin music, but their efforts were not fully appreciated by the public at large. The large cities of Europe were naturally the favored ones, and they were given the privilege of hearing Liszt, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Henrietta Sontag, Jenny Lind, Wachtel, Stigelli, Mario, Grisi, and many other famous artists. The oratorios of Mendelssohn, the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven, the Passion Music of Bach, and the resurrection of the latter master's great works by that genius, Mendelssohn, were to be heard in the large cities of Europe only. Of Beethoven I scarcely knew anything, his Second Symphony in D being the only number of the nine which had gained a hearing in the small cities, and I longed to become initiated in the great wealth of the tone-world, so—apart from the financial side of the question—I

eagerly seized this opportunity of travel, feeling that a beautiful world lay before me in the realm of music. It was about this time that the Müller Brothers quartet created a furore, but there were few other string quartets that could be heard publicly.

Our first stopping-place *en route* to Russia was Berlin, and in this city I heard grand opera; listened to Liebig's and Henning's symphony orchestra, while for lighter music there was Pliesner's orchestra, whose excellent playing gave me great delight. In Berlin I also heard Joseph Gungl'. With such advantages I gained a knowledge of the compositions before named, having the opportunity of hearing the world's greatest artists upon the violin, violoncello, clarinet, French horn, and the flute. The work in which I was professionally engaged brought me in contact with men of science and learning, such as professors of astronomy, chemists, and men of mechanical knowledge generally, and I consider the time spent in Berlin of the greatest importance in a musical and business way.

During my stay I lived in the house of a shoemaker, the first floor of the dwelling being given over to the shop, while the family and lodgers occupied the rest of the house. When I went to live there, the shoemaker and landlord had just buried his wife, and the management of the shop and household was in the hands of Pauline, a niece of his departed Frau. It was Pauline to whom I applied for a room. It was Pauline who received me cordially and showed me the one room which was for rent; and while I did not like the location or the appearance of the little room, I was induced to take



it because I saw Pauline, and a piano in the parlor which the pretty young landlady assured me I could use when I pleased. This decided me, and I took the room then and there.

Pauline was a happy, vivacious Berlin child of about eighteen summers, a pronounced blonde, with limpid blue eyes and a head covered with masses of long wavy, golden hair. She was inclined to be tall, was well built, and had really aristocratic hands and feet. Her skin was exquisite, and every time she laughed—which she did very often—she showed a set of white, even teeth. She was always amiable, and, as in Berlin the low and even the middle classes are possessed of an unlimited amount of humor, I must confess that with the shop, the room, and, best of all, the piano, Pauline appeared to me at that moment as a very attractive person.

When I was settled and was busily engaged playing my scales and exercises one evening, a spirit of meditation stole over me, and in this poetical state of mind I began to improvise. It was twilight, and Berlin for the moment was a quiet, peaceful town, for everything was still and reposeful. As I played I noticed the door slowly and silently open, and, glancing out of the corner of my eyes, I saw the golden head of Pauline appear. She stepped lightly into the room, closed the door softly, and, coming to the piano, stood looking down at me from over my shoulder, and, as I finished my improvisation and turned around on the stool, she expressed to me in soft and tender words her high appreciation of the music which she had heard while standing outside the door. She begged me to forgive her

for coming in uninvited, assuring me that she could not resist the temptation to enter and express to me her admiration for the soul-filling harmonies which she had just heard. Of course I thanked the pretty maid for her words of praise, and, wishing to appear gracious, I asked her if she was interested in playing the piano. She replied, that while she was not herself a performer, she was passionately fond of music, especially singing, and that she sometimes sang.

To my sorrow, and out of deference to music which is produced by the human voice and whose instrument is the throat, I must confess that vocal music has little attraction for me. I have always looked upon song as a conglomeration of words and tones, and instead of enhancing either one or the other, the production of a musical tone that has underlying words for its rhythmical existence appears to me antagonistic to the pure tones which have no words, viz., those belonging to the violin tribe, or such sounds as are emitted from a wind instrument under the same conditions. I have always thought that the domain of the human voice included a larger circle, and encompassed in that circle many emotions of the human heart and an unlimited wealth of thought that finds its means of expression through the medium of the tongue, but when it is associated with the musical tone and is dependent upon the word, its functions and charms vanish, and unlike the tone of a musical instrument which is free from this incumbrance, its vibrations, being independent, are therefore of a more musical nature.

This thought in itself did not put me in the mood

to be in perfect harmony with the ecstasies which Pauline expressed over my work; still, as I desired to show my appreciation for her art, I asked her to sing something for me. She readily consented, adding, however, that her uncle was deeply interested in her of late, and she thought it would be more prudent for her to sing for me when he was out of the house, as he was inclined to be jealous, and that she would come in some evening when he was absent.

A few nights after the above conversation, she came and offered to sing for me, her uncle being away for the evening. Her selection of songs had a strong leaning toward the love ditties and sentimental ballads which half a century ago served the musically inclined. I looked the collection over, finally taking Abt's *When the Swallows Homeward Fly* as the least sentimental of the lot. She had sung but a few bars when I discovered that she possessed too much feeling, too great pathos, too little intelligence, and, above all, no consideration as to tone-production and true pitch. She began in the key of C, and while advancing eight bars her voice was transposed into higher regions, and while pursuing her flight she reached the twentieth bar safely a tone higher on D. Of course I politely followed, transposing for her, and as she sang with so much expression and so earnestly this beautiful effusion of Abt, she flew still higher until she was a minor third from her original start. Up she went to E, then to F, F sharp, and, my good Lord! she was soon a fifth above. In following her rapid flight she evidently felt perfectly at ease, feeling sure of

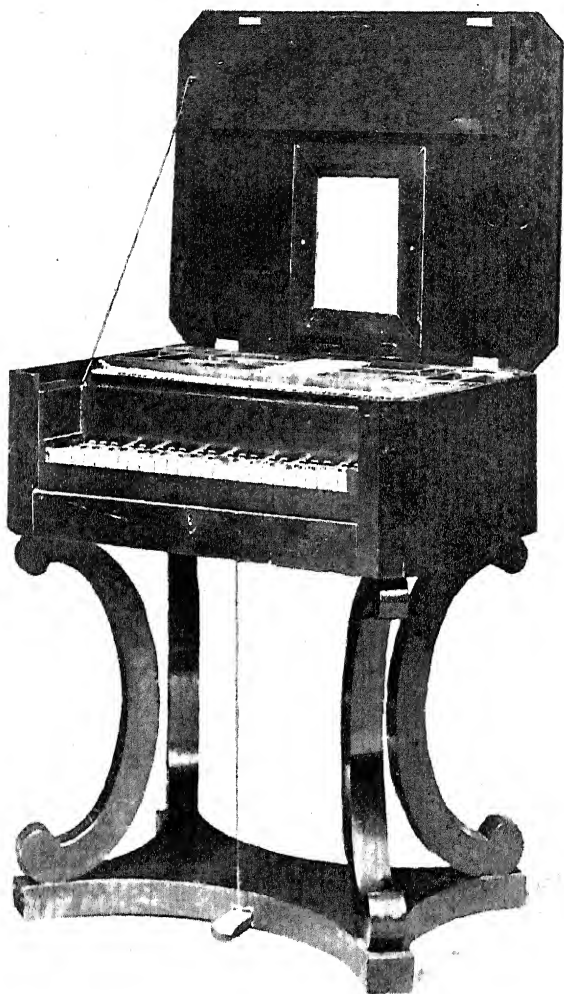
herself until finally she was rudely awakened from her musical enthusiasm by discovering that the high notes of the song were no longer within her reach, and she utterly collapsed, and the poor swallows which were expected to fly homeward fell to earth with a crash on the last note.

I was amazed and in agony. Beautiful Pauline of yesterday was no longer an ethereal being to enchant me with her charms, and rising from the piano I abruptly left the room. I shall never forget *When the Swallows Homeward Fly*, and how fair Pauline made them soar and soar until, when finally they found their nest, they must have been quite as miserable as I was when trying to follow their rapid flight. I am sure that they would have much preferred to rest than do as I did after hearing their fate from the pathetic and somewhat ambitious voice of Pauline, for in my unhappy state of mind I decided to say adieu to my musical muse, at least for the present, and to enjoy and revel in an art which had equally interested me in my early life when living among the priesthood of Bavaria in the cloisters of the monks. I was tired of music, and I wandered away to look at the churches of Berlin, for I had always entertained a fondness for ecclesiastical architecture.

There is certainly a distinct difference in the state of the fine arts between the people of Northern and those of Southern Germany. The main cause may be found in the religious state of these two sections, but, above all, in the distinct climatic conditions, for the style of architecture of Northern Protestant Germany, with its simplicity of interior decorations,

and the Catholic churches of Southern Germany may be easily distinguished. The churches of Berlin fifty years ago did not speak so powerfully to my imagination, and did not, therefore, afford me that rest and quiet which had come over me when looking at the domes of Würzburg, Speyer, Bamberg, and, especially, the grand domes of Regensburg, Augsburg, and Cologne. In looking at Berlin's beautiful churches, the hidden forces that controlled my musical state gave me rest and courage to again enter the house of "*La cantatrice des hirondelles*," and entering my room I threw myself upon my couch while my imagination occasionally carried me to the swallows of *Fräulein Pauline*.

The success of my employer in Berlin was pronounced, and our stay had to be prolonged on that account. The city was still in a state of siege, and remained so for many years. One day while walking through the streets I approached a public place, called the Molken Markt, and as I drew near, I heard a great noise, the clamoring of several thousand people, principally workingmen. There was a tremendous tumult which seemed to me very much like a revolt, and as I entered the Markt and inquired into the disturbance—for it was unusual in broad daylight and in a public place—I was told by one of the rioters that the release of Jacoby from prison was about to take place. This man Jacoby had been imprisoned because of the speeches he had made to the good people of Berlin during the revolutionary days, and on account of the principles promulgated. Jacoby was one of the representatives of the Chambers, and he enjoyed great



SQUARE PIANOFORTE. FOUR OCTAVES.

Once in the possession of the Princess of Turn and Taxis in Regensburg.



popularity and respect among the Liberals and those who were actively interested in bringing on the revolution of '48.

I had been presented, before leaving home, with a peculiar and most conspicuous kind of an overcoat, which was known among the few as a capuze. It was a long coat with a hood or cowl, and was made of heavy woollen cloth of a blue color. This coat must have looked very strange, if I am to judge by the frequent remarks which were thrown at me as I walked along the streets of Berlin. But to return to the riot. My curiosity prompted me to hasten on and join the shouting mob, and, as I was forcing myself into their very midst, I suddenly felt a grip upon the cowl of my coat with one hand, while I was struck in the side with the butt of a heavy army musket, which, I assure you, had the effect of arousing me from my curious state of mind. Turning, I saw a big gendarme who had placed me under arrest, and I was quickly led away from the howling mob, and although I found a few defenders who tried to save me from the burly gendarme, they were unsuccessful, because my captor was immediately reinforced, and the squad, charging with bayonets into the crowd, quickly scattered them. I was literally dragged away and not allowed to halt until I was safe in the arms of the police department. There I was ushered into the presence of several officials, charged by my captors with having been a rioter. A number of civilians had followed me to the station, and while the gendarmes were trying to drive them from the building one gentleman of fine address forced himself into the room,



and told the officer in charge that he had witnessed the whole affair, and that he could truthfully testify, though I was a stranger to him, that I was not actively engaged in any of the manifestations that gave force to the riot, either by action or words. This voluntary witness must have held some official position of importance, because his word was immediately taken, and I was permitted to go free, and I thank my lucky stars that I was able to get off so easily from the clutches of German law,—the cause of which was not due so much to my peaceful attitude, as to the cut of my coat, and I offered a silent prayer to the genius of the tailor who had fashioned the capuze.

My love for Berlin cooled down somewhat after this adventure, and I consulted with my employer upon the advisability of an early departure from the city, and as he, like myself, was not over courageous, and imbued with the mild tendencies of good and peaceful citizens, I found little difficulty in convincing him that it was better to move on and try to find more congenial fields for our work. Having finally decided to leave Berlin the next day, I returned to my room and called in Pauline. She looked very handsome that evening, and could not have been aware of the impression made upon me by her singing when she put to flight the swallows; rather must she have been favorably impressed by my abrupt manner of leaving, for she was more coquettish than ever. I told her that I was to go away on the morrow, whereupon she burst into tears, and, throwing herself into my arms, implored me not to leave her; to stay in Berlin, to settle there, and marry her. She

did not love her uncle, she could not be left to his mercies; she had it all arranged. We would elope that very night, and she felt sure that great happiness and success would follow our union, and that in a musical way we would be of great benefit to each other.

I must confess that never before had I found myself in such a trying position, and while the swallows still fluttered about in my brain, I felt great sympathy for the pretty child, and, as I could not find any means of consoling her in her grief, I assured her that I should always remember her sweet face, the friendly interest she had taken in me, the many little acts of kindness I had enjoyed while under her roof. I also assured her that as long as I lived I should remember her singing, and that at some future day I might settle down in Berlin, and, if so, I would return for her and in some measure try to repay the true affection which she had so profusely showered upon me. She seemed content, and we parted the best of friends. Happy am I to state that, like all little girls, she was won with a new doll, and when next I visited Berlin I looked her up and found her married and caring for a family of two little golden-haired tots, the image of their fair mother.

After leaving Berlin we visited Danzig and Königsberg, and finally arrived in Tilsit upon our journey towards Russia. In all of the cities where we stopped we met with unexpected success, and after a profitable week in Tilsit we started upon our memorable trip into Russia.

The winter of '49 was an unusually severe one in

that section of the country, where severe winters always prevail, and we were told that travel in Russia was of a very perilous nature, for there were no railroads of note at that time on the line of route which we had mapped out, and as the ground was covered with snowdrifts, it was out of the question for us to find the road. As it was not possible to obtain vehicles of any kind we had to supply ourselves with a large covered wagon which we caused to be fitted out on a long sleigh. Travel then depended upon our obtaining fresh horses at the post-stations along the route. For this purpose we had to get a permit and certificate from the Russian Government at the frontier, which not only enabled us to get horses as we needed them at each post-station, but also included competent drivers. The horses furnished were quite small and untrained, unlike the domestic horses of Germany, and as the banks of snow were very high, and no definite road could be followed, it required as many as six and sometimes eight horses to pull our caravan through the drifts. One driver led the horses by means of a lash, whipping them continually, while two men on the backs of the others had to manage them. The post-stations, then located far apart, did not offer lodging or food, and it was therefore necessary for us to carry with us sufficient provisions to keep us from starving, while at night we were forced to sleep in our covered sleigh in front of the station.

Our party consisted of my employer, Mr. Aischmann, an assistant by the name of Oscar Richter, and myself, and I do not like to recall the hardships which we were forced to endure upon that long,

tiresome journey. To keep from freezing we were covered from head to foot with furs, and thus protected we managed to reach the first post-station, after covering some twenty miles. It was night when we arrived, and bitter cold, and, although wrapped up in fur blankets, we were chilled to the bone. After a conversation with the agent, who knew but a few sentences of the German language, we made out to understand that it would be foolhardy for us to continue the trip, as the snowbanks were treacherously deep and the road proper could not possibly be found. If, however, we insisted upon proceeding, it would be well for us to take, in addition to the drivers we already had, two extra men on horseback who were familiar with that section of the country, to ride ahead and give the drivers some little knowledge of the course to be followed. The agent said that he would be one of them, while he had a Polish Jew who knew the country well who would go with him. I did not like this man's face. There was something very sinister about the expression of his dark eyes, and I told my employer that I feared that the men would lead us into some corner and, after robbing us, leave us there to die. My suspicion proved correct, because when we commenced to make preparations to start next morning—it was snowing and blowing a gale, and nothing could be seen ten yards ahead save the immense banks of snow—the agent advised us to wait until the storm ceased. As we could not see anything wrong in this, we consented to stop over at the station, and it was afternoon when we ordered the horses and again got ready to resume our journey. The wind

had subsided, but the air was full of snowflakes. As we were leaving, the agent came and told us that it would be impossible for him to go with us, as he had business of an important nature to attend to, which he had forgotten the night before, but that the Jew had a brother who was quite as well acquainted with the roads as he was, and that this man would take his place as guide. I objected strenuously, but my employer did not heed my advice, and the two hard-looking fellows accompanied us.

The days in the north are short, and after we had travelled through the snow for a few hours, we found that night was upon us, though we were still some distance from the next station, which we had been told was a village. As the darkness increased I overheard a conversation between the two men ahead, which they carried on in Hebrew, evidently thinking that there was no one in our party who understood that tongue. To my horror, I learned that these men were in compact with our drivers, and that they intended to rob us of our goods and money and leave us upon the road to perish, and, if we gave them any trouble, to kill us, because there was at that time in that section no law to punish them. I immediately called a council of war, and informed my employer and Mr. Richter of what I had overheard. We talked the matter over in our caravan, and it did not take us long to decide what to do. My employer and Richter were strong and courageous, much more so than I was, and as we were provided with good pistols we took them out and, calling a halt, ordered the two men ahead to come to us, ostensibly to talk over the continuance of the journey.

As they rode up, my employer covered one with his pistol, as did Richter the other, commanding them to dismount. Trembling they obeyed, and standing in the snow they were told that we knew all about their plot to rob us, and that unless they immediately gave up their arms they would be shot down like dogs. The villains denied that they had any intention of harming us, that all they had said was a joke. We were not to be deceived, however, and we made them hand over their weapons, and watched them carefully as we proceeded in the darkness to Chavli, which we finally reached without further adventure.

It is not within my province to give a vivid description of Chavli and its inhabitants. It would be hard to tell how many people lived there, or how they eked out an existence; where they came from; whether they ate and drank as do others; what was their color and how they loved one another; neither can I give a sworn evidence as to whether there were streets or houses which were inhabited, and whether they were built of stone, wood, or mud; whether there was ever a summer day when the warm rays of sunshine stole over the village and warmed the cockles of their old hearts; whether there were shops, churches, factories, schools, scandals, or milkmen to wake you at 3 A.M.; and, finally, any rag-peddlers to call out in musical Russian, "Cash paid for rags." These and many other things I could not find out when I entered Chavli, because it was night. Naturally, every intelligent man who dwells upon subjects of this kind painfully and hopefully awaits the break of day to look about

and find evidences and solutions to such illusory problems, and when at last the dawn of day broke upon the horizon, I hastened to peer out and, to my sorrow, I found that all of my ideas of little Chavli were as naught, for the entire village lay buried in snow.

It is possible that my powers of seeing and comprehending may have been in a weak condition when I here relate my experience of that *Nachtlager* of Chavli. When we reached the village, we were directed towards a hut which was kept by a Jewish family who were accustomed to accommodate the few travellers who visited the place. The family consisted of a very old man, close on to one hundred, his two sons in the sixties, and a woman who must have belonged to one of them, her age being no index. To describe the little old woman I must have had a powerful magnifying-glass to see what her charms were, and as to her color, stature, and dress I cannot speak authoritatively, because the room, lighted by a single lard lamp, was so dark that I could not see her distinctly. My attention was principally directed towards the very old man, who was seated at a table upon which was the lamp, and before him lay an open book from which he was reciting sentences without referring to the book, these recitations being accompanied by some musical tones that did not rise beyond the compass of a third or a fifth. His shrunk, sallow face and deep-set eyes, his little corkscrew curls which hung down upon either side of his wizened cheeks, his claw-like hands spread out upon the book, made a picture that I cannot forget. Upon either side sat

the two old men, his sons, and they, too, murmured or chanted in an antiphonic style,—alternately with their father.

This melodramatic performance in the little dingy hut, which was utterly destitute of furniture, made a powerful impression upon my mind, and I felt inclined to investigate the nature of this peculiar proceeding, so I stepped up to the trio and asked them in German what it all meant. One of the sons, pointing to the old man, told me that he was the father, and being a rabbi was intensely interested in the study of the Tora, while they were engaged in studying the Talmud, Mishna, and Gemara. They must have been philosophical works concerning the Hebrew faith which they practised, partly as a glorification of the mercies of Jehovah, and also the wisdom and guiding principles of the Hebrew in this world.

When I compare the wretched condition of the hut, the mode of living, and the village in which this trio dwelt; when I consider the poverty they must have endured from the time they entered upon their earthly existence into a world that could offer them almost nothing either politically or religiously, having no social pleasures or those things that lead men and women to a higher state of civilization, I am astounded that under such conditions the very philosophy of life should be practised, religious tendencies which stood in strong bas-relief in this wretched hut; and when the old rabbi sang in his declining and feeble tones of the glories of Jehovah, he did more, I say, than that holy father who dwells in a palace in the Vatican, surrounded by everything



beautiful and, unlike the filial assistants of the rabbi, guarded by a regiment of cardinals, archbishops, and priests, can ever do to demonstrate to enlightened Christendom religion and its intrinsic purity. If the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope would search for a birthplace, let it look to the hut of the rabbi and his two apostles in far-away Chavli as not an unsuitable one.

We were tired and hungry, and therefore appealed to the rabbi for shelter and food. Our request in this direction was not as eagerly anticipated as our religious demands might have been, and we were directed to the old woman for information as to what there was for us in the way of lodging and food. She opened a door leading off from the room in which the rabbi and his sons were chanting, and disclosed a small room having a partial floor of rough boards, the rear being entirely uncovered save for a few bundles of straw. This she kindly offered to us for the night, which offer my employer and Mr. Richter thankfully accepted while I had to sleep in the wagon, it being my night as watchman. Some hot drink, which they called tea, and some coarse bread made of straw, formed our evening repast, after which I went out to the wagon where I passed the night.

The storm had entirely ceased when morning broke, but it left upon the ground an enormous amount of snow, and when we appealed to the postmaster of the village for horses, in conformity with our contract with the Government, he informed us that the horses were too small to drag our heavy caravan through the snow, and that we must be

content to make the next stage of our journey with oxen, which we did. We were not given breakfast at the hut, but were told that some few miles farther on we would be able to get something. Trusting in Providence, we started for the next post-station, and fortune indeed smiled upon us, for when we halted we were generously fed with meat, bread, potatoes, and really good coffee. I must confess that we all felt like giving thanks to the Creator who had so far guided us through a wilderness and desert of snow, preserved our life in sundry places, and, finally, brought us to a haven of rest where steaming hot coffee, bread, and excellent potato soup were to be had for the asking.

Having partaken bountifully of our meal we started on, refreshed in mind and body. The mid-day sun now reappeared and its rays shone brightly upon the virgin snow until it sparkled and glistened like a field of diamonds, while the wind, keen and cold, ever and anon blew the particles into little mounds of fantastic shapes, the rays from which were almost blinding.

We were all in a very happy mood, and, while we were meditating on a better time in the near future, we were by no means disheartened. Suddenly, in that wilderness of snow we heard the sound of music, and beheld, approaching us in the distance, a forlorn Italian with an organ on his back, and with him another equally forlorn being, holding, cuddled close in his arms, a poor little monkey, whose naturally hairy skin was covered with a big fur coat, his wizened, wrinkled face and little beady eyes mournfully peeping out at us from under the

close-fitting hood, as much as to say, "What are you doing here?" I must say that, while I have heard many symphony orchestras and enjoyed the performances of grand opera and oratorio, the dulcet tones which came from that little organ, and the appearance of the artists and management of the band of musicians moved me far more than had the others. The symphonic music which filled the air sounded heavenly in the quiet snow-clad space, and when the monkey appeared in his rôle, garbed in a little red cap and gown, very much bespangled and hung with tiny tinkling bells, choosing our wagon for a stage upon which to show his art, I could not fail to recognize and call to mind pictures of the drama of mediæval times, when prose, poetry, action, and music found its stage in the open air with the blue vault of heaven for its dome.

Finally we reached Riga, the capital of Livonia, and, with the exception of St. Petersburg and Odessa, the most important port of all Russia; Riga, whose walls have been converted into promenades; Riga, with St. Peter's church, built in 1406, and its tower 470 feet high. The effect of the night's stay in the room at the house of the old rabbi had weakened my employer, and he had to go to bed at Riga with a severe attack of rheumatism, brought on by sleeping in the straw upon the floor of the hut. Fate was indeed kind to me, and though I was forced to spend the night outside in the wagon as watchman, I was in perfect health, while those whose lot I really envied were, the one in bed, the other scarcely able to crawl about. I immediately sent for a doctor, and in a few weeks

Mr. Aischmann was able to be up. During his illness I lectured and sold optical goods in the city.

While Riga was not at that time a large city, its splendid position on the river Duna gave it a certain amount of prestige, and I found it a most delightful place of residence, apart from its commercial importance. It boasted of many titled inhabitants, both in military and civil circles, and the sciences and arts were cultivated. In consequence of this, I must mention the existence of a very good opera-house where an excellent company were employed, and whose standing received the indorsement of Conradin Kreutzer, the great composer of *Das Nachtlager in Granada*, who, with his daughter, resided there until his death, which occurred a few months before my arrival. This was a source of great regret to me, as I was a profound admirer of Kreutzer's work and the overture of the above-named opera which found a place upon every concert programme the world over. Riga, with its operatic and dramatic performances, I enjoyed immensely, and I did not regret the extra work which my employer's illness caused me, because it gave me such opportunities in a musical and dramatic way, and even later on, when our business became so successful that we decided to tarry for some months, I rejoiced in the thought that I was to hear some magnificent performances, both operatic and dramatic.

On account of the social importance of Riga, many celebrities in the artistic world visited the city, and gave evidence of the immense amount of work done by Kreutzer and the influence he cast over the field of musical culture. I obtained the

loan of a pianoforte and availed myself of the instruction of a fine teacher, and when I left Riga I had improved greatly in my pianoforte playing. I had also the opportunity of playing chamber music with members of the orchestra, where I played the 'cello part in trios and quartets.





### CHAPTER III

Dorpat—Reval—Pleskov—A Short Trip to Finland

AT the end of our stay my companions moved on to St. Petersburg, and, as my employer deemed me capable of carrying on the work in the immediate places between Riga and St. Petersburg, he left me one day and I went to Dorpat, or Derpt, a town northeast of Riga on the river Embach. Dorpat is noted for its university, founded in 1632 by Gustavus Adolphus, and connected with it is an astronomical observatory which had at that time a tremendous telescope, made by Fraunhofer of Munich, which stood hardly second to any instrument of that kind in the world. This, of course, was of great interest to me, and I soon called upon the Professor of Astronomy, Mr. Mädler, who received me cordially and showed me over his magnificent observatory. He was also a great musician, and his wife was considered the finest pianist in that section. By his kind invitation I went to his home, and there became acquainted with a most delightful and cultivated family, and through his influence I was presented to a body of musicians, members of a string quartet employed

by a nobleman who lived upon a large estate near Dorpat. The members of this quartet were four of the most eminent musicians in Germany, and their work consisted in playing string quartets for the nobleman. I shall always remember my visit to his castle and the picturesque and romantic location of it, but especially the marvellous playing of the four artists at a *matinée*,—and from that time I became more and more possessed with the fascination of quartet playing.

Our perilous journey into Russia, and the many changes that had come to me in a business way, as well as my researches in the musical world—for I had at all times sought to gain knowledge—finally told upon my rugged constitution, and after visiting a few small places I became ill, and by the advice of a physician I went to Reval, a seashore resort on the Gulf of Finland, for the purpose of building up my health, and to rest and recuperate. My principal object, however, was to obtain more instruction upon the violoncello, for I had been told that at Reval there lived a good 'cello player, connected with the orchestra, who would give me lessons. I wanted to get away from business, and intended to devote my time for a few weeks exclusively to the study of the pianoforte and violoncello.

Reval at that time was a port of great importance, and having a delightful situation it attracted annually large numbers of tourists who came there for health and rest. At the hotel where I was staying I was informed that a travelling company of dramatic artists, by name the Müller family, were to give a series of performances, to consist of recitations from



VERTICAL CONCERT GRAND. SIX OCTAVES.

Made by C. Müller, Vienna, about 1780.





the classics of Lessing, Schiller, Goethe, and others, while a part of the program would be given over to vocal selections by Fräulein Marie Müller, who was a remarkable vocalist, enjoying a reputation all over Europe as a ballad-singer. I had a piano-forte in my room upon which I practised daily, and it happened that the Müller family were assigned rooms adjoining mine, and from time to time I heard delightful strains of music, a voice singing *solfeggio* exercises, while later I heard Beethoven's *Adelaide* sung most intelligently by a female voice.

The invisible music which was wafted to my ears, and the charm that was hidden in its peculiar timbre, excited my curiosity, and at the same time commanded my attention, there was so much cultivation connected with it, and it was so different from Pauline's warblings. On the other hand, the sound of my piano and 'cello must have reached the Müller apartment. I felt very anxious to know something about the possessor of that voice which had moved me so strongly, and so appealed to my musical sense. As I could not intrude myself upon their privacy, I resolved to watch them as they passed down the hall.

Just as I was opening the door, Mr. Müller, with his wife and daughter, stepped into the corridor, and in my anxiety to see the artists, I hastily wished them "good-morning," whereupon Mr. Müller thanked me, and as he glanced into the room through the open door and saw my piano, which stood just opposite against the wall, he mentioned to me his pleasure in having heard me improvise, paying me a few sincere and agreeable compliments.

I immediately invited him into my humble room, which invitation he accepted, entering with his family. After we had chatted a few moments he told me that he intended to give a series of performances in Reval, and this opened the way for me to express my delight in having heard the sweet tones of a voice in his apartment, and to add that it would give me great pleasure to hear it again. At this Mr. Müller told me that the singer was his daughter Marie, and I felt constrained to pay her my just acknowledgment of the pleasure I had derived from her singing, and to congratulate her upon her art.

The impression made upon me by Fräulein Marie was one which affected me powerfully. She was a superlatively beautiful woman, with Titian coloring, tall, slight, and willowy, with quantities of wavy hair which she wore brushed off from her forehead and gathered loosely in a coil high upon her head. Her eyes were amber, and in them lay a world of hidden meaning. There was a peculiar charm about her figure, and she moved as gracefully and noiselessly as a fawn. She was perfectly gowned in the fashion of that period, her dress having evidently been suggested by her coloring. "She was withal so fair as to take the breath of men away who gazed upon her unaware." When she responded to the few words which I addressed to her, and I heard the faultless pronunciation of the German language, which could only have been gained by a careful study of elocution and the most intimate knowledge of rhythm, I felt that she possessed a charm aside from her musical voice such as I have never since

experienced. Her facial expression as she spoke, the opening and closing of her lips disclosing her regular white teeth, and the expression of her eyes, completely entranced me. Marie appeared to me like a Venus, and when I associated her personal charm with her musical genius I became her slave.

It took me some seconds to collect myself so as not to appear as the weakling, and in a fortunate moment I threw myself into the arms of music and spoke to her of Beethoven's *Adelaide*, which I had but a short time before heard her render. I told her of my profound love for this wonderful composition, and remarked that the proper medium, so it seemed to me, of interpreting such a love-song was only to be found in a tenor voice; that I had never before heard it attempted by a soprano, and that even though the words of the song expressed manly love for woman, I could but admit that never had I listened to that song with greater pleasure and admiration, with more devotion for the master, than when she intoned its musical strains. Marie, in a dignified manner, bowed her lovely head in acknowledgment, and with charming self-possession thanked me. I then invited her to sing for me, and she graciously consented. Going to her room, she shortly came back with a group of songs and requested me to accompany her upon the piano. I must have used good judgment despite my embarrassment, for I have never been able to understand how the strong pulsations of my heart permitted my fingers to strike the chords, and how I kept my mad passion from running away with them, but when we had finished she spoke most encouragingly to me,

telling me that I had great musical ability, and that she had never sung with such a perfect accompanist. Before I had time to thank her for her words of praise, she interrupted me with the most determined and urgent request to play her accompaniments at the recital to be given by her parents. This, as may be conjectured, was a great boon to me, and while I made some few excuses as to my inability to do justice to such an artist, I accepted the proposition. After this arrangement Marie visited me for rehearsals, and out of this friendship ripened a devotion between us, and through it all I believe I was guided by the right spirit of the musical work assigned me.

There certainly was much talent in the Müller family, and while I do not know the history of their career, I could not fail to recognize the earnestness of both the father and mother, the keen appreciation which they showed for the work of the author, the careful study and schooling which they must have undergone; while their expression of dramatic intensity marked the full stage acquaintance with their art. There was a remarkable clearness and distinctiveness in the way in which they rendered each author; the emotional tendency of Schiller, the unbounded intellectuality of Goethe, the lyric hue imbued in Heine's exquisite poems, and even when they touched upon less important and severe dramatic bits, even those in a humorous vein, the artist betrayed itself and proved that there existed the most intimate familiarity between them. It was really the artistic work of these performers that brought forth the hearty applause of the somewhat

critical audience, and they were in a satisfied and happy mood when Marie appeared as the songstress of the evening.

The young artist must have been in a highly nervous state when she stepped out upon the stage, for I observed with some trepidation her timidity and nervousness as shown by the trembling of her hands that held the music, but on account of her familiarity with, and being perfectly at home upon, the concert platform, she regained her composure instantly. The first attack of the musical tone that formed the melody of her song was influenced in its nature by her mental condition, which gave emphasis and young life to the creation of it, and her first triumph as a great artist was achieved. The love of her art, the delight which she must have experienced in the euphonious tone that consisted of the highest and most diversified colors, her gradation of this tone when she entered into the melodious mosaics of the melody, the warm nature of the poet,—all these elements like garlands of flowers encircled her vocal art, converting it into a most profound work of tonal ecstasies. As she proceeded, and as her nature brightened up in harmony with her exultation, she cast an electric magnetism over her hearers, which held them spellbound, and when she finished her song the audience was tumultuous, and amidst deafening applause a profusion of flowers was showered upon her. Her triumph also conquered my poor heart,—“for, after all, there is no arrow for the heart like a sweet voice,”—and when she finished I felt that life without her would not be worth the living. I realized at that moment how

insignificant was my beloved violoncello, and all the art that I had fancied was within me. I was crushed, the abject slave of a voice, and when I sought my couch that night after the concert, my restless spirit kept vigilant watch over my brain; and all the ideas which had for years ruled me, all the plans which I had made, lay shattered before my eyes. I was as helpless as a rudderless ship at sea, and in my uncontrollable will I absolutely decreed that I would cast everything to the four winds and drift in the tide of Marie's affections. Such was my mental attitude when finally my physical nature gave way and I fell asleep.

The next day I told Marie of my love; and while she admitted that she loved me in return, that without me life would lose half its brightness, she said she was wedded to her art, and had taken a solemn oath to remain single until her voice left her, or became too thin and worn to longer gain for her a hearing. Of course I begged her to reconsider, and many wretched days followed. She was firm, however; and I must here state that her words were prophetic of their own fulfilment, for she died several years later upon the stage of the Vienna Opera House, in the midst of a triumphal song, from heart failure, resulting from fright at the cry of fire, and her lifeless body was borne from the scene of her late triumph, the crashing of burning wood, the falling of heavy timbers, chanting her requiem. Fair Marie!—

“Round thee blow, self-pleached deep,  
Bramble roses, faint and pale,  
And long purples of the dale.

These in every shower creep,  
Thro' the green that folds thy grave."

Marie's verdict influenced me to leave Reval, and as I did not care to live in cultured and artistic circles I determined to undertake a journey to that ultra-Russian city called Pleskov. In the absence of notes, and because of the unfortunate position I was in at that time, I cannot recall any of the incidents of the journey from Reval to Pleskov; all that I remember concerning it is that I had to choose as the vehicle of my transportation a cart without springs or seat, a few bundles of straw forming a cushion between the body of the cart and myself. It was in the summer season, and the roads were hilly and in wretched condition, and I was assured by the post-agent, who provided me with horses and driver, that three horses would be none too many to take me and my goods, together with a skilful driver, to the next station on the way to Pleskov.

When I compare my ideas, which were so richly represented in my brain, with the external shocks given to the rest of my body, as we bumped along over the stony, hilly road, I consider myself a most attractive subject for a dime museum, for the outside influences of the joggling cart brought me in touch with life and the early struggles which I had undergone at the hands of the old cantor in Scheinfeld. It was agony, I thought, learning how to play the clavichord; but when I compare the hopefulness of my situation when under lock and key in the old cantor's room, and I had only to appeal to my



memory to save me from the promised spanking, with the uncertainties of some day gaining the hand of Marie, when her voice would, despite all of my earnest pleadings, say "Farewell," I feel that I have kept good track of all of the foreordinations of my Creator when I entered this world.

My driver, who spoke some indistinct German, interrupted my chain of thought, and informed me that we were nearing a village, which announcement gave my shattered nerves and bones some relief. We entered the little place, and I asked my driver whether there was a tavern or not, and, if so, to drive me there for the night, whereupon he told me that he was not acquainted in the village, but that he would try to find a place for us. After making several inquiries, he came to me with the cheering information that there was no inn, but that when a stranger happened to visit the place shelter was offered by the priests, there being a dozen or more scattered about the village. This hamlet I found had no regular streets, but a series of little crooked alleys and cross-roads, leading to small stone houses, whose architectural style seemed to be in perfect harmony with the dwellers, for there was one door which was very narrow and low, while the windows reached almost down to the alley, and were divided into different sections. They were very small, and some broken glasses were boarded over. The roof came slanting down to meet the windows, and projected over them, forming a close proximity to the floor. All around the lower edges of the house were troughs, which must have served to catch the rain-water for the use of the family,

and as I saw a number of pigs, both large and small, quenching their thirst therein, it seemed to me a very sensible and ingenious contrivance, quite different from the modernized methods of obtaining water, saving the landlord lots of bother and expense.

One unpleasant feature was that there was no distinct division made in the trough which would point to an aristocracy between swine and men, and as I saw in the distance a few cows also availing themselves of this clever device, I formed a most emphatic opinion of the democracy of Russia under a despotic government. I was very curiously affected, and desiring to compare the interior of the house with the exterior arrangements, I entered one of the houses, and found the floor made of laths, separated from each other by about two inches and elevated, so that in washing the floor the water could find an escapement. The walls, for the purpose of keeping out the cold, were made of some kind of cement filled with hair and straw, and this cement was thickly put on. There were no chairs or movable tables, nor could I perceive any bedsteads. There were, however, rough benches of wood, built alongside the four walls, which not only answered for chairs, but at night served as bunks, while for a table there was a wide board suspended from the ceiling by means of ropes long enough to reach any of the benches, so that it could be moved at will from bench to bench. In one corner there was an altar, with a statue of the Virgin Mary, holding in her arms the Christ-child, very lavishly decorated with paint, so that her face appeared in a roseate

hue, while the child, in lighter color, lay in swaddling-clothes across her lap. Next to the Virgin, and to the right, was a statue of St. Joseph, while on the left there was a fanciful figure which must have been intended by the artist to represent a donkey. A lamp, made of a wick floating in a glass bowl of oil, hung in front of the Holy Family, throwing a faint ray of light upon the statue. This lamp, I was told, burned day and night. When we approached the altar, the proprietor and my driver reverently crossed themselves and bent the knee.

After a few moments of religious meditation they arose, and I was shown to another part of the abode, which was a large room opening into a courtyard, and without any flooring whatsoever. This room was used as a stable for the domestic animals, such as cows, pigs, hens, etc., with the customary straw and hay scattered about. As I could not speak the Russian language, I could not make my wants known to my host, and I therefore appealed to my driver, telling him to ask the man whether he could give us food and shelter. The priest kindly consented to keep us, and informed me, through my interpreter, that there was a room upstairs for strangers which was very comfortable, and which generally served him as his study, for he kept his books and writing materials there,—this room he courteously offered me.

The owner of the house was one of the dozen priests of the village, and as he arranged some sort of a couch for me in the study I immediately took possession of it. Our evening meal consisted of an excellent cup of tea, some smoked venison, a saucer

of delicious honey, and the usual straw bread. The samovar and the little canteen which contained the vodki were displayed with the other viands upon the swinging table. The priest and his wife—for it is a well-known fact that the priesthood of the Greek Catholic Church are permitted to marry—having blessed the food, the children, of which there were eight or nine seated in different corners of the room, having murmured a short prayer and crossed themselves, we were served. I must not forget to mention a most comfortable and ingenious arrangement which was used at the tea-drinking. Suspended from the ceiling were two or three small strings to which were tied lumps of sugar which were passed around to be sucked in turn by each member of the family.

Being quite exhausted and covered with bruises, and aching in every bone, for I was literally a tattooed man from my long ride in the jolting cart, I needed no narcotic, and a few minutes after my head touched the pillow I fell asleep. When I awoke early the next morning I saw the priest standing before the little altar, which was close by my couch, going through some kind of matin service in the most religious and devout way. As I could not understand in what his supplications consisted, and for what happiness and joy he gave thanks to his God, I arose and greeted him in a reverent and obedient manner, while he, advancing towards me, blessed me, pressing a kiss upon my forehead, giving me to understand that I was absolved. I then tried to make him understand that I had been very comfortably housed, and desired to pay him

for his hospitality. He would accept nothing, and, in return for his kindness, I made my offering at the altar of the Virgin Mary, leaving two roubles, and departing with the assurance that I was in no way indebted to the priest or the deity he served.

That night I reached Pleskov. Should I describe the city of Pleskov by anything which stamps it as differing from any other Russian city which I have visited, and if I should choose a name to distinguish it, I should call Pleskov, like Brooklyn, N. Y., "A City of Churches," not mentioning its narrow streets, inartistic buildings and dwellings, the dullness of its atmosphere and those who breathe its air, the lazy tread of young and old alike, the sallowness which was then so noticeable upon every face, the lack of cleanliness that pervaded the whole city, and which detracted from the religious ardor which existed everywhere. Pleskov, half a century ago, was alive with churches, prayer-houses, and temples, the streets being literally studded with them. At that time at every hundred feet there was some little building scarcely wide enough to admit three persons at a time, and only a few yards long, which contained an altar at one end with the eternally burning lamp swinging before it, a little bench upon which the devout visitor could say his prayer undisturbed, and a picture or two of some patron saint or saintess. Such is an accurate picture of the interior of one of the Pleskov prayer-houses.

It is customary for the Russian to never pass a place of worship, however small, without entering it, crossing himself, kneeling down and silently offering a prayer. He then goes on his way, entering

the next prayer-house *en route* and repeating the performance, until his walk abroad is accomplished. This indomitable zeal of the Russian was of the utmost interest to me, and I therefore found great pleasure in visiting the largest church in the city. I was surprised, as I entered its wide portals, to see the stream of humanity that wandered in quite aimlessly: men with their kits of tools and in the garb of the workshop, women with baskets heaped high with fresh vegetables to be sold later on. These, one and all, reverently knelt about the vast edifice, praying in front of either pictures of the Holy Family, which seemed to have been painted by the most unskilful artists, or small statues roughly hewn from stone, quite unlike the artistic ones which are to be found in the Roman Catholic churches in other parts of Europe.

While I am not acquainted with the calendar of the Russian Church, and therefore do not know the history of that vast collection of saints, or what they did when actively engaged in this life; what moral characteristics they possessed and what heroic deeds they performed which entitled them to such everlasting peace and prosperity; should I judge their greatness from their appearance, I am forced to admit that I do not think that they are fair subjects for the Elysian and congenial companionship of such noted beauties as Venus and Apollo. The most important attraction in this really remarkable collection was a large coffin of stone directly in front of the altar, and in it the patron saint of the church, completely covered with gold and precious stones, about which crowds of devotees surged, sprinkling

it with holy water and crossing themselves in the most devout manner.

The service of the Greek Church then consisted of much chanting by a number of priests, unaccompanied by organ. A continuous tolling of the bells in the tower above served the purpose, and quite covered up the absence of this more sonorous instrument. While there was something very monotonous and unusual about it, I do not believe it would be a great inducement to converts generally.

The guide who accompanied me was very versatile, speaking German, French, and English besides his native Russian. He explained at great length to me the attractiveness of the Greek Church and its form of service, and, calling my attention to the bells, he suggested a visit to the tower, which he said contained a large number of bells which were named, each for a patron saint. As these bells were never rung for their intonation, but were tolled by men and boys singly and in concord, and as it was time for them to be set in motion, I decided to follow him to the belfry. To reach this high place we had to mount a narrow spiral staircase, and every seventy-five steps there was a small platform where we could stop and get our breath and peep out upon the city below, for small windows admitted light at these landings.

When I looked at my guide, before making the ascent, I felt a little doubt as to whether I had not better go up alone, for there was something very sinister in his swarthy face and his dark eyes which never met mine squarely; but finally, when I had taken a few steps up the uncanny stairs, I concluded

to trust to my usual good luck, and, stepping down, I commanded him to lead the way. He, prompted by servitude and extreme politeness, stepped aside, and with a wave of his hand motioned me to go first, and thus we started up the dark, narrow stairway. When we had passed the first landing, where I did not stop, he rudely pressed himself between me and the rope which served as a rail, under the pretext of seeing if the blinds on the window at the next landing were open, and in doing so I felt a tug at my watch-chain. There was nothing unusual in this, however, owing to the limited space in which he had to pass, and I thought nothing of it until we reached the second platform. Arriving there, I was somewhat out of breath, and as it was light I unconsciously reached for my watch to see how long we had been in making about half the distance. To my horror, it was gone! I remembered well having looked at it just before we left the church below, and I was therefore fully convinced that I must have lost it while making the ascent. Like a flash it dawned upon me that my dangerous-looking guide had robbed me of it when he pressed by me on the dark stairway, and that the tug which I had felt had been made when he jerked the watch from my pocket.

Knowing the insecurity of travel in Russia, and the peculiar methods of the country, I never went unarmed, and a loaded pistol was always in my pocket, so I did not hesitate as to what I should do, but turning to the man I said, "You scoundrel! you have taken my watch, and you had better hand it over to me at once," whereupon the man grew



angry and lifted his arm as if to strike me. As he did so I whipped out my pistol and covered him; his arm fell, and he, too, for that matter, and seizing me by the knees he fairly begged me not to shoot him, kissing my feet in his fright, and at the same time he offered me my watch and chain. I did not continue my ascent up to the belfry, but taking my watch, I commanded the trembling thief to rise, and at the point of my pistol I made him precede me down the stairs.

Feeling now that I would enjoy a visit to some country located near the sea, and as I was very tired of Russian caviare, onions, tea, and the frequent use of vodki, I went to Pernau, and took passage on a vessel bound for Finland, where I hoped to sell lots of spectacles and study music. I had been told that Helsingfors was much of a musical centre, and that certain celebrities in that line were residing and working there, so that apart from business I had the promise of a pleasant and instructive visit. One bright, beautiful day in summer I sailed away across the Bay of Finland for Helsingfors. The unfortunate affair in the belfry at Pleskov, and my love episode at Reval,—for my heart still ached,—had something to do with the highly nervous state in which I found myself as we sailed over the bay; but the cool breezes, so pregnant with salt, invigorated me, acting like a powerful tonic, and I must confess that I felt very well satisfied with my position in life. It was a complete rest, and as I reclined upon the deck of the ship, smoking my long-stemmed pipe, which was filled with fragrant Turkish tobacco, and in the quiet and peaceful

atmosphere, I threw myself into a state of profound meditation, thinking always of one who appeared before my imagination as in a halo, and I drifted on and on quite aimlessly, caring little where I landed or what goal I reached.

There was actually no perspective point ahead, no hopeful thought to materialize, but I knew that the future would bring me somewhere, and I concluded to drift on, for I had nothing more in life—all my youth and happiness seemed gone. I deemed it wise, however, to stop at Helsingfors, and as we were nearing that port I heard from the lower deck the tones of a violoncello, and at once I discovered that the player, whoever he was, was a very skilful one. After listening a while the impression became stronger, and when I stepped down the stairway and stood in front of the cabin from which the magical strains seemed to come, I realized that it was the grandest 'cello playing I had ever heard. While the tones of the instrument were of a powerful and elastic quality in the *adagio* in which the artist indulged, I was enraptured when a movement of the most rapid passages and runs greeted my ears.

I heard the ringing of the bell signalling our arrival at Helsingfors, and warning me that if I was to disembark I had no time to lose; but I stood there spellbound while the invisible 'cello player must have been so wrapped in his playing as not to have noticed the signal, for he kept on with his music. Again the bell rang out, and it was now for me to decide whether to step off the ship or to stand in front of the cabin door and listen to the magical player; and as he increased his virtuosity,

and as I felt more and more interested in his playing, I concluded to pursue my journey to Abo-Björneborg. As our ship glided out of the port the tones of the 'cello grew more and more pathetic, and I stood entranced, rooted to the spot.

Finally, the music ceased, and I heard the heavy footsteps of a man walking around the cabin. The door almost immediately opened, and there stood before me he whose playing had so moved me. I stepped up to him at once, introduced myself, and in a voice tremulous with emotion expressed my admiration and delight for his wonderful playing. He received me most graciously and, after thanking me for my kind expressions, invited me into his cabin, showing me his beautiful Cremona violoncello which he considered as dear to him as life itself. I shall always remember how he handled that instrument, his love and reverence for it; how he fondled and caressed it as his hand glided over its beautiful neck, and when his bow began to vibrate across the strings how he spoke, with an almost childlike love, of its exquisite tone; how the quality charmed his ear, soothed his heart, and pacified the longings of his soul.

He certainly was a musician by the grace of God, who had in some immaculate form entered into the depths of the very nature of the instrument, and who must have trained his fingers into the weary hours of the night. I asked him his name, and he told me it was Karl Grädener, that he was Musical Director of the University at Keil, and was on a visit to his native city, Helsingfors; so I said: "Herr Kapellmeister, why did n't you then stop at

Helsingfors?" He looked at me with great surprise, opening wide his dark-blue eyes, as he replied, "Stop at Helsingfors! Why, what do you mean? I have put up my 'cello to make ready to disembark." Then I told him that we were some distance from the port, and that I, enchanted by his playing, had concluded to follow him and his 'cello. He seemed pacified, for, grasping my hand, he thanked me again and again for my words of admiration and my sacrifice to art, and expressed himself as fully rewarded for failing to get off at Helsingfors. We chatted, and he played for me until Abo was reached, and I was for the time the happy Scheinfeld boy again.

At Abo we said good-bye, he going back to Helsingfors and I up into the quaint town, which interested me greatly as I walked along its streets. To divert: By a strange coincidence, when in Vienna in 1892, I was one day talking with a number of musicians on the Prater when the Kapellmeister of the orchestra and also Professor in the Conservatory of Music was presented to me. His name, Hermann Grädener, awoke within me the memorable trip to Finland, and I told him of it, asking if the magical 'cello player was a relative. Whereupon he told me that the man was none other than his father, and that he had died in Hamburg in 1883.

But to return to Abo: Everything appeared clean and inviting, the shops were filled with attractive goods, and, above all, I was surprised to find both sexes of light complexion; not one dark-haired person did I meet. I have since thought that Finland would be an Eldorado for the gentlemen of

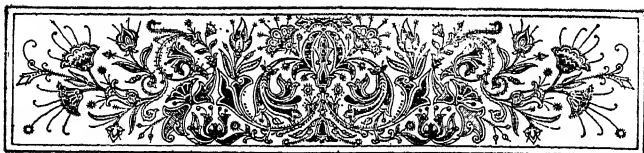
the bald-headed row of our New York playhouses where the bill is of the burlesque order, for the Abo maidens had hair of all shades of yellow, from a light gold to a vivid flame color, the red head being much in evidence, though without the accompanying white horse. The bald-headed theatre-goers would, in addition, find ample opportunity to study those blue-eyed maidens, who were at the time of my visit as merry as the little mountain maids in *Adonis*. I immediately proceeded to fall in love, not with one, but with the entire collection, and I made up my mind that I would devote a small share of my musical art to the glorification of the beautiful blondes of Abo, Finland.

I found a good hotel, where I had excellent accommodations, and as evening came I was greatly surprised to find that obstinate day remained, without giving Luna a chance to display her charms and displace old Sol. There is no night in the Finland summer, and words are inadequate to describe the pleasure which I felt in thus turning night into day, and unconsciously I spent the entire first night of my visit serenading the blondes, accompanied by a flute player whom I met at the hotel and who was enamored of their charms.

My short stay in Finland was of untold value to me, as I did a remarkable business in fitting the blondes with spectacles and lorgnettes, so that when the time came for my departure I felt loath to leave a country where there was such a maximum amount of pleasure for a minimum outlay of the coin of the realm. My mental buttons were, however, so bright from the fish which had formed the principal part of

my diet, that I felt myself equal to any emergency, and decided to join Aischmann and Richter in St. Petersburg, where their business had flourished, and from whom I had received several notices, telling me that I was needed in their shop in that city. Without further delay I hastened to the Russian capital, which pleased me greatly when I beheld it in the distance, and much more when I wandered about its streets and mingled with its people.





## CHAPTER IV

St. Petersburg—Return to Coblenz—A Few Weeks in France—A Voyage on the Sailing Vessel *Jenny Lind*—To America—Arrival in New York City—Trip on Foot through Eastern New York State—Pittsfield and Lenox .

THE world-renowned street, the Nevski Prospekt, which begins at Admiralty Square, is one of the finest in Europe, and is 130 feet broad and about four miles long. It is lined upon either side with trees, palaces, colossal buildings, public institutions, temples, and churches—all vying with one another in their splendor, and showing the outgrowth of a modern style of architecture. Here I for the first time saw modern pavements.

Our establishment was situated upon the fascinating Nevski Prospekt, in one of the largest buildings, with an interior courtyard. There must have been hundreds of families residing there, for connected with the establishment was a director who looked after the dwellers. He was the first person to call upon me, for the purpose of having me enter my name in the house-register. I was told that this register would be handed to the Police Department, and that I would soon receive a notification to appear before Count Orloff.

The summons came shortly, and I hastened to present myself before this august personage. The great official into whose presence I was admitted, and who had already been informed of my nationality, age, business, and the probable length of my stay, spoke to me very kindly, looking me over from head to foot, and asking me numerous and pointed questions. These interrogations caused me no surprise, as I knew that I was in the domain of the great Nicholas I., who was the ruler of many millions of freemen and more slaves, for serfdom was then in existence. I evidently satisfied the official, for I left the building with a certificate endorsing me from the secret police, and I at once proceeded to the Police Department proper, where I was given a document permitting me to stay in St. Petersburg. I have briefly explained the means of obtaining this precious paper, but I must add that I was put to considerable trouble and expense, for not only the first official had to be liberally feed, but so on down the long line, passing seven or eight different stations before reaching the goal where the permit was finally awarded.

Our shop was a very attractive one, and we received calls from the highest circles, for we were really experts in our line, and our fine goods soon obtained a favorable recognition among the élite of the city. It is a strange thing that prominent men and women, influenced from birth by the highest motives as to morality and good breeding, should ever deviate from their original intentions and actions so as to fall from grace, and it is a surprising fact that what I have to relate here should be in



concord with the foregoing. A Major-General of the Imperial Russian Army one day entered our shop for the purpose of buying a pair of eye-glasses. The General was a man of advanced years, and his appearance proclaimed him a member of the nobility. His commanding presence, his handsome military coat, covered with numerous and costly decorations, showed him to be a person of importance in military as well as court circles. The General addressed us in French, and asked Mr. Richter, who, by the way, was a brilliant French scholar, to show him some eye-glasses. Mr. Richter, recognizing in the General a most distinguished man, took from the show-case a tray of expensive eye-glasses and lorgnettes mounted in heavy gold frames—the tray containing several dozen pairs. The General tried on first one pair, then another, but did not find what he wanted, and asked to be shown some that were mounted in tortoise-shell. Mr. Richter turned to another section of the place, in the rear of the store, leaving the tray of goods he was showing on the counter, and while he was engaged in taking out a tray of tortoise-shell eye-glasses I, standing near him but facing the General, saw the General take two of the most expensive lorgnettes from the first tray, and in a nonchalant manner slip them into his coat pocket.

I was astounded, and it was with difficulty that I restrained my impatience until Mr. Richter had secured the tray for which he was searching. As he started to take it to the customer I motioned to him to step into a corner away from him, and I then mentioned what I had seen. Richter was

much older than I was, and a man of cool and deliberate mind, and he whispered that it was all right and that he would attend to it. Going back to the General, he showed him the tortoise-shell mounts, but they were not just what he wanted, and so he left without making a purchase, promising to call again another day. As he was going out of the door, Mr. Richter, in a most polite and obedient manner, requested him to leave his name and address, which he did, taking out his visiting card and handing it to him. After the General's departure I said to Mr. Richter, "Why did you allow him to leave without paying for those lorgnettes?" whereupon Richter began to laugh, saying: "That's nothing, Moritz; he is a well-known thief, and will not be surprised or offended when he receives a bill for the lorgnettes to-morrow morning, and he will promptly settle by sending his check. To call his attention to the theft at this time would never bring us the money, but would rather bring our firm into many legal controversies which would cost us twice as much as the articles are worth and involve us in inexplicable complications which would prove disastrous to our future business." Just as Richter said, the General sent us a check a few days afterwards, and we were not troubled by him again.

I must now recall the well-known fact that the winter and even the early spring days are frightfully cold in St. Petersburg, and while people in consequence drink the strongest liquors, a good cup of tea is a very desirable and popular beverage; and for this reason St. Petersburg has a large number of tea-houses where people sit and enjoy a cup of the best

tea in the world. These tea-houses are also provided with pipes with long stems and a jar of fine Turkish tobacco, and along with the cup of tea it is quite *au fait* to smoke and indulge in a game of billiards, for every tea-house has several fine billiard tables. Every visitor to St. Petersburg finds this a delightful recreation, and spends an hour or more in the tea-house daily, reading the papers, smoking, and forming pleasant acquaintances and friendships.

I always spent some portion of the day in a tea-house, and one evening I entered one of the more fashionable ones. I was quite alone, though I noticed as I left my house that a gentleman was leisurely but carefully following me. I would probably not have observed him had he not been a man of unusual appearance, and one who controlled his actions in accordance to mine. His presence was readily perceived when I entered the tea-house, and even more when he seated himself close to me and almost immediately opened conversation with me. I recognized in him a gentleman of refinement, and he must have known that I was a stranger in the city because he called my attention to the fact, and offered his services should I ever wish to avail myself of them. I thanked him for his kindness and interest, and admitted that I was a stranger, whereupon he asked me where I resided, what was the motive of my visit to the capital, and, finally, my nationality. Like a flash my suspicions became aroused, but I was guided by the fact that at that time there existed in Russia an intolerable system of espionage, and that every man must expect to be accosted and called upon to give some personal

account of his doings. It was this that prompted me to respond affably to his questions, conveying to him the fact that I was entirely without hidden motives. I am inclined to think that my investigator received a healthy impression of my intentions, for when we had finished smoking our pipes he wished me good-evening and left the tea-house.

Easter dawned in the beautiful capital cold and dreary, for the Russian calendar prescribes an early Easter. As I walked up the Nevski Prospekt I met a big fellow, a tea-seller, who had a large tray hanging in front of him, which was suspended from straps around his neck, and upon which was a samovar full of steaming hot tea. With a glad cry he rushed at me, and before I could collect myself kissed me again and again, embracing me with his long arms as much as the tray in front would permit of his doing, and crying out greetings in Russian. Greatly annoyed, I was about to knock him down for his impertinence, when it was explained to me that upon Easter every one has the privilege of kissing one another and that I must expect many such encounters if I promenaded the Nevski Prospekt.

St. Petersburg offered many and manifold attractions pertaining to art and science, and there I heard the most wonderful and unique musical performance I have ever listened to. It was a concert by a Russian brass band which was entirely Russian in its characteristics. When I tell you that it was artistic I do not mean that every performer was a skilful player upon his instrument, for he could play only one note, and this band, therefore, had fifty performers, each instrument giving out just one single

tone. It was artistic, however, in its skilful manipulation, consisting in that each performer must be on the watch so as to be ready when called upon to produce his note, for if there was a chromatic it required just thirteen people to play it, and as the obtaining of that note must have been facile, it must, to speak paradoxically, have been difficult for the performer to get in at the proper time. These one-toned performers were not musicians, but they must have been trained by an artist; and, if my memory is not much at fault, their leader was none other than Joseph Gungl'. Though the difficulties of such a performance may be easily understood, I was greatly charmed with the tone coloring and really skilful execution of national airs, waltzes, dances, and marches which they rendered. The members of the band were Russian peasants or serfs, who were undoubtedly not initiated in the art of music.

I had also the opportunity of attending some fine performances at the Opera Italianski, hearing among other operas Meyerbeer's *Robert Le Diable*, and what a magnificent performance it was! The great Fanny Persiani as *prima donna*, Mme. Grisi as second donna, Mario as tenor, and some other well-known singers of that time whose names I have forgotten; and such a fine orchestra under the baton of Maurer! It seemed to me that every musician was an artist, and as the opera was entirely under the patronage and support of the Emperor, these musicians received a pension for life after a limited service in the orchestra. I formed the acquaintance of several of the members of this remarkable band, and

played at various times the cello' part in string quartets, while I was fortunate in receiving a few lessons from Carl Schubert, the great violoncellist.

On account of the perilous journey into Russia, the health of my employer, Mr. Aischmann, became broken, and the severity of the Russian climate had already made such inroads upon his weakened constitution that he was told by his physician that it would be suicide for him to remain longer, so he sold out his business to advantage, leaving Mr. Richter with the purchaser as manager, while together we left for Germany. It was early in the spring when we set out from St. Petersburg by diligence, our accommodations having previously been booked, Mr. Aischmann occupying an inside seat for which he was forced to pay double, while I rode outside by the driver. The proceeds of the sale of the business were carried by Mr. Aischmann in a leather bag, hung from a belt around his waist. We had been travelling some few days and nights when we drew up before a station for dinner. We alighted, and Mr. Aischmann, unbuckling his belt, took off the bag containing his money, and placing it upon a chair beside him sat down and enjoyed his dinner.

As the time was limited, we hastened our meal, and when the horn of the postilion gave the signal for the start, Aischmann hurriedly swallowed his tea and made for the diligence. I followed, and with a blast from the horn and a crack from the long whip the fresh horses started and we galloped away, the bag of money left behind upon the chair in the station. We had covered perhaps a mile of the road when we

were brought to a standstill by a blood-curdling cry from inside the diligence. Stopping and running back, expecting to find some one dead, we beheld the pallid face of Aischmann, who told us that he had left his money at the station, and he implored the driver to turn around and drive back for it. His distress was so great that it excited the sympathy of the other passengers, and a general request was made to the driver; but he remained obdurate, declining to go back, giving as his reason that he would receive a heavy fine if he did so, besides losing his position. A gentleman who understood the Russian language thoroughly then made another strong appeal to the man, and by means of a large bribe and the promise to keep the affair quiet, we returned, and my employer and myself in a state of great excitement rushed into the room where we had but a short time before dined, and greatly to our surprise and joy found the table undisturbed, no one in the room, and the money-bag upon the chair where Mr. Aischmann had placed it.

After a long and tedious journey, day and night, we finally reached the German frontier. I felt very happy when I realized that I was away from the kingdom of the Czar, and as my brother Louis with his family had moved from Scheinfeld to Coblenz, I directed my steps thither in the company of my late employer. As I was about twenty-two, and had accumulated some money, and as I was fond of roving about, I concluded to engage in the hop business with my brother. I asked him one day if he did not think that I might make a profitable trip through France, visiting the cities where there were

large brewing establishments, where I had been told hops were in demand. Louis agreed with me, and I started out as a dealer in hops. I must confess right here that I was not a success, for to be successful in the hop business one must be able to drink a lot of beer, and though I was not adverse to drinking beer in moderate quantities, I could not be a professional beer-drinker and preserve my general health; so that while I did not lose money I did not make any, and I returned to Coblenz after visiting Strasbourg, Lille, Tours, Poitiers, Rheims, Paris, Orleans, and other cities.

In Paris I had a most delightful time, revelling in art and music, and meeting many artists in the dramatic and musical world. One day, when I was strolling along the Boulevard des Italiens, looking into the attractive shop-windows, I felt a heavy hand on my shoulder and heard the words, "*Gott sei dank!*" and turning I beheld my old friend, Herr Jost, the chocolate manufacturer, whose magnificent estate I had visited in Switzerland. The old gentleman fairly embraced me, and told me that he had lost his pocket-book, and had no one to whom he could apply for funds: he was in despair and begged the loan of a small sum of money. Gladly I gave the rich old gentleman from the Engadine what he asked for, and he told me to meet him at nine the next morning at one of the cafés for breakfast and for the return of the loan. I was there at the appointed time, and Herr Jost and a friend whom he had fortunately found entertained me royally, and I received back my loan.

Returning to Coblenz, I decided to rest for a while,



as there seemed to be no more worlds for me to conquer in Europe. While living there, assisting my brother, I met a most accomplished young woman, a Miss Dreyfuss from Alsace-Lorraine, a governess in an American family, and I was quite charmed with her dignified presence and intellectuality. We frequently met at the house of mutual friends, and while I admired her I did not feel inclined to settle down just then, and Marie still held possession of my heart. One day, in a restless state of mind, I told my good mother, who lived with my brother Louis, of my unrest, adding that I thought that fate had decreed that I was not to taste the joys of prosperity. She was at that time reading *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which had just come out, and she must have been somewhat affected by the graphic descriptions of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, for she pointed to America and the United States as a land that would perhaps recompense a young man who was earnestly inclined to work, and while she loved me as a good mother loves her son, she showed courage in denying herself the privilege of having me near to soothe and comfort her latter days, in advising me to sail across the ocean and seek my fortune in the United States.

It is perhaps an astonishing fact, that while I had been a constant traveller, I could not find rest for any length of time anywhere; in fact, to look at the same faces, to hear the same voices, to live in any one place was, for me, simply an impossibility, an ardent desire for travel driving me on without aim; so I concluded to take passage on the sailing vessel *Fenny Lind*, bound for New York. Through the

intercession of my relatives in Coblenz, I succeeded in obtaining a berth in the captain's cabin, and also such privileges as went with it,—food from his table, etc. The ship was crowded with emigrants, principally families of peasants and mechanics, going to a new land to seek their fortune. We had a very stormy passage, and were a month in crossing the ocean. I was hardly upon the water when, having paid my tribute to Neptune, I was seized with an intense longing for home and, in spite of the hardships endured in Switzerland and Russia, I cried in my loneliness, and longed to again set foot upon my native soil. A tremendous rain-storm set in as we entered the port of New York, and it was still pouring when we landed. The confusion of the restless passengers in securing their goods, such as were packed in rude chests, trunks, baskets, boxes, and bags was simply frightful, and the officers could not control them, and this must have been the reason that my luggage either became lost or was taken by mistake before I could claim it. My search for it in the drenching rain and my anxiety to find it will never be forgotten. Fortunately, on account of the honesty of one of the peasants, I finally succeeded in recovering my trunk, but the gift of my good sister Babetta, which was a large hamper of Seltzer water from the original spring, put up in stone jugs, was lost, and I hope it gave great pleasure to the fellow who took it away.

The state of my purse after paying my passage and investing a certain sum in optical goods was very meagre, and when I stepped on shore in New York City I had but five francs in the world, and

was a stranger in a strange land, while my knowledge of English was quite in keeping with my purse. After securing my trunk I sold my mattress which I had used on the passage, and then, directed by some runner, I started for Greenwich Street. I must say, that while I had been in many poor hotels during my travels over Europe, aside from the rude hut at Chavli, my lodging in Greenwich Street was incomparable, for it was simply wretched. The next day I decided to pawn my watch and with the money seek respectable lodgings. Consequently I hastened to a pawnshop kept by a man named Simpson, and, securing a loan of ten dollars, directed my steps to East Broadway, where I was told I would find a good boarding-house. There I found a charming home presided over by a woman of refinement, who had recently arrived in this country with her husband from Munich, where he had been engaged in the banking business, but on account of various reverses had lost the greater part of his fortune. Mrs. L., who was of a kind and sympathetic disposition, and who also had a fine family of children of about my age, gave me the assistance and the motherly advice which I needed in a land where I was homeless, friendless, penniless, and alone. The many experiences gathered in the Old World, and the sorrows which I had been called upon to pass through and which had never before embodied themselves to such an extent as to overpower me, now stood before me like grim spectres, and their sadness simply crushed me. There seemed to be no hope to guide me, and I must ever remember the good landlady who, when all seemed so dark, spoke

tender words of encouragement and expressed her confidence in my ability to succeed. Being comfortably settled and housed, I had to make my plans for my support: this consisted in knowing that I possessed a limited stock of optical goods, which I feared I would have difficulty in selling, and also a musical knowledge, which I might utilize.

After carefully thinking the matter over, I decided to try and dispose of some of my wares, which, as I had anticipated, was no easy matter, for I could not speak English, and I realized by this time that success in selling goods depended very largely upon the way they were offered to the buyer. I therefore appealed to the daughter of my good landlady, asking her to teach me a few sentences of English which would serve me in a business way. Having obtained a very diminutive knowledge of that language, I sallied forth down-town with the object of searching out German names upon signs, where I could offer my goods in my native tongue. I think that I acted wisely in selecting places kept by German merchants, and, while I did not meet with unbounded success, I sold a few pairs of eyeglasses before night, and my profits enabled me to defray the few expenses I had incurred. I did not, however, grow rich, and the very method I had to pursue in entering offices was disgusting to me; and as the warm days of spring approached and the heat of the metropolis affected me, I concluded that I could follow my vocation in a more dignified and agreeable manner in the adjacent country.

There was living at the same house with me a young lad who had but recently arrived in this

country, and his social position and knowledge of English was in keeping with mine. The similarity of our positions prompted me to talk over the situation with him; and as Mr. Rau sympathized with me as much as I did with him we soon became firm friends, and having no incumbrances, we concluded to travel together. He had a small supply of fancy goods, while I had my case of optical goods,—a fine combination surely. Fortunately, at that time there was a strong competition between two boats running between New York City and Albany, and as each of them was determined to outdo the other in carrying a large number of passengers, we were told, by those who were in position to know, that for the cheap class of travellers free passage was given by one of them. So one day we embarked from New York City, taking the boat that charged nothing, reaching Albany early the next morning. Leaving the boat, we at once started out into the country.

It was a beautiful day, and as we walked along we felt privileged to have been able to get away from the heat of the city. We carried our wares with us, I having my spectacles in a case, and my companion his fancy goods in a small black box. Our English teacher had written out a list of sentences such as—"Good-morning, sir, or madame," to be used when we entered a house, and "Good-bye," when leaving. Then as we offered our goods I should say, "I sell spectacles," while Mr. Rau's speech was, "I sell fancy goods." The first farmhouse we came to was chosen by us as the place where we should try and make a sale, and at the

same time put in practice our English. It was quite a task, I assure you, and we found it hard to decide who should be the first to approach and speak to the inmates, and as it really made no difference who was the spokesman, Mr. Rau expressed his willingness to have me go first. I took courage, and going to the door knocked. A buxom country lass of about twenty summers, with laughing blue eyes and curly hair, opened the door, and I, taking off my hat and bowing, entered the room, followed closely by Rau. The mother sat at a table sewing, and I immediately started in to explain my business. With great respect I said, "Good-bye, I am spectacles," whereupon she began to laugh, and I, quite embarrassed, stepped back, and Rau, advancing, said, "I am fancy goods."

It is needless to say that we did not make a very good impression, and the women, thinking we were a pair of escaped lunatics, made us understand that our room was better than our company, and we departed, much cast down and very hungry. This was indeed a bad beginning, and we walked on for a few miles without daring to make another call. Finally we got command of our courage, for our stomachs were clamoring for food, and we entered another house and met with better success. I saw a piano-forte in the parlor, and I tried to make the farmer understand that I could tune it if it needed it, whereupon he said that he did n't know anything about it. I opened the piano, sat down and improvised a little, then I examined the instrument carefully. My music must have appealed to the good gentleman and his wife, for he signified his

willingness to have me tune the piano, after which he requested me to play for him.

As I left the instrument he asked me how much he owed me, whereupon I made him understand that I should be perfectly satisfied if he would give Rau and myself our dinner, which he seemed to think an exceedingly good bargain, but I very much doubt if the same feeling existed after we had finished eating, for I am inclined to think that we came out ahead after all. We moved on, greatly refreshed by our wholesome meal of ham, eggs, coffee, and bread. At our next stopping-place I was unsuccessful, as there was no piano and the people were all blessed with good eyes; Rau, however, sold a few yards of ribbon, a little lace, and a pair of gloves, which paid our way. We stopped with farmers all along our route, and as they were not in the habit of keeping lodgers, we usually paid our bill with fancy goods or a cheap pair of spectacles. There was no sale for my line of goods, and my influence as partner consisted mainly in tuning pianos, but I managed to make more than Rau.

One hot, sultry day while on the road, we were nearly famished, and our purse was very light. As evening came on, we found that all we had in the world was a few pennies. The night was beautiful; it was moonlight, and cool after the intense heat of the day, and as we came to a large orchard, I felt that we could with safety sleep under one of the trees and save our pennies to buy something to eat next morning. I therefore told Rau of my purpose, and he, after a moment's thought, entered into my plan, and we made our way into the orchard.

Throwing ourselves down upon the grass, with our satchels for pillows, we slept until the dawn; and now that I enjoy one of the best beds in the world, I question whether I have ever slept more peacefully than that night on the grass, with the blue, starry canopy of heaven for my cöver.

We travelled east from Albany, following what I think must be the route of the Boston and Albany road, and one day neared Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Before entering that town we decided to dissolve partnership, Rau to go his way and I mine, for we found that our profits did not enable us to live with any degree of comfort, so I entered the town alone, Rau going on. While walking aimlessly along the principal street, I heard some one tuning melodeons, and as I had never seen such an instrument, I made bold to enter the building from which the sound came, and found myself in a melodeon factory. Among the workmen there were several Germans with whom I could converse, and I soon made known the object of my visit, and one of them kindly explained the sweet-toned little instrument to me. In Germany I had never seen a melodeon, and as I was anxious to try one I asked permission, which was granted. It took me but a few minutes to learn how to operate the pedals which supplied the intoning power for the reeds, and as I continued to play I, having been accustomed to live on wind of late, conceived a great liking for the instrument.

Having finished my improvisation a man approached me, extending his hand, telling me in German that he was a musician and a violoncello player of great renown, introducing himself as Herr



Lenzen. He was a man of colossal stature, his short neck supporting an unusually large head which was nearly bald. He was clean shaven, with a strong mouth, from which his underlip projected boldly. His eyes were deep-set, and his heavy eyebrows, which met over his eyes, were thick and shaggy, while his eyelashes swept his cheek, making the eyes seem dark although I could not distinguish their color. His arms were short and very muscular, while his hands, large and bony, did not look like the hands of a musician. They were almost black from exposure to the sun, and were covered with coarse black hair and freckles. His feet were flat, and he walked with a rolling, shuffling gait. His coat and vest were of the cheapest, coarsest kind of cloth and altogether too heavy for the season, while his trousers were of duck which had once been white.

His whole appearance was unclean, and as he stood excited and perspiring before me I doubted his assurance of being a great musician and violoncellist, and I cannot say that I was pleased when he said: "I am going to give a concert here to-night upon the violoncello, and as I have no accompanist you shall be the man. I was told that one of the workmen in the factory would be capable, but I have searched the place over and was just about to give up in despair when I met you. My good fellow," he continued patronizingly, "I am a musician, an artist, and I am in distress and must have some money, and unless I give a concert, for which I have already made arrangements, I shall die. Young man," he exclaimed excitedly, "you are a godsend

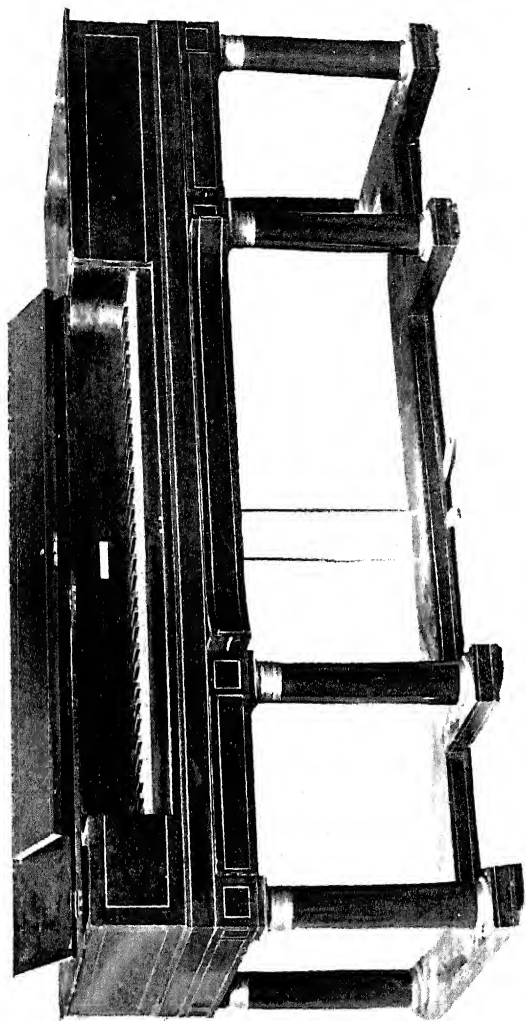
to me; you cannot, dare not, refuse to accompany me, for you have not the heart to say no to such an artist, to a countryman who is in need of assistance."

I finally cut short this harangue by saying that I was not there for that purpose, that I had business of my own,—I wonder if this statement was true?—and that under no considerations would I lend my services for the proposed concert, adding that I was entirely out of practice and did not, therefore, feel inclined to appear in public. My remarks had the effect of exciting Lenzen still more, and he seized me by the shoulder and violently shook me as he continued imploring me not to leave him in such straits. The effect was so sudden and soul-stirring, that I finally gasped out between shakes that I would consider it, provided he would show me the music which he wished to play, so that I might look it over; whereupon he began to laugh in the most hilarious way, dancing about the room like a madman, and exclaiming between shrieks of laughter, "Music! Music! That's too rich! The idea of an artist like me having music! Why, my boy, I play without notes, and you must accompany me by ear. Come right along with me to the house of a friend who owns a piano, and I shall run over my solos with you." I reluctantly followed him, and together we entered the house of a well-to-do German who had offered this fellow the hospitality of his home.

Lenzen took out his 'cello and began to play, I having previously requested him to play alone so that I might hear and catch the composition and form an opinion as to the scope of my duties as

accompanist. To my great surprise a remarkable violoncello player sat before me. He had marvellous execution, an unlimited control over his finger-board, and his powerful arm and iron hand carried his bow over the strings, giving a tone that was rich and full of color, while his conception of the composition was highly artistic. The wretched-looking being of a few moments before was transformed into a god. His selection showed great judgment, and when he had finished, and being lost in his art, he arose from his chair, saying, "Beethoven is my god,—I love him, I adore him," and approaching the piano where there was a lot of music scattered about, seized a piece and holding it before my eyes said, "See this! See the name! It is Beethoven's great love-song *Adelaide*; let us play it," and placing the score upon the rack he fairly carried me to the stool, seized his 'cello, and began the haunting melody. To describe the fervor and passionate tone which came from the strings of his 'cello, the trembling and sighing notes that echo Beethoven's heart, interwoven with the glorious words of the soft breezes of the night and the rustling of the leaves that live in the sounds of Beethoven's *Adelaide*, the grief and sorrow which gave birth to the marvellous song which was wavering throughout the humble little room, no greater tribute was ever paid to the great composer than that of the poor tramp 'cellist that day in Pittsfield. After that magnificent performance I was bound to help him, and after an hour's practice I felt myself ready to accompany him.

That evening we gave our concert in a small hall



SQUARE PIANO. SIX OCTAVES.  
Made by A. Babcock, 1820.



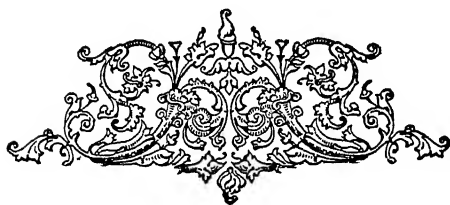
before a goodly audience. Lenzen sat before the door and took the money, and when the people were seated we gave a really fine program. The room was lighted by candles which cast a flickering and uncertain light over the place, and in that weird and barren hall we gave as the opening number an improvisation by myself, followed by two 'cello solos; then Lenzen sang the *Marseillaise* and *The Old Folks at Home* with 'cello accompaniment. The next number was a Strauss waltz for piano and 'cello, then a guitar solo, *The Spanish Fandango*, by myself, and *Variations on Yankee Doodle* and *Old Dog Tray* on 'cello; the last being a song with piano accompaniment and 'cello obligato. The proceeds of the concert, while comparing unfavorably with those of Paderewski, were to our minds satisfactory, for after paying for the use of the hall there was about fifteen dollars left, which the artist wanted to share with me, but which I declined to accept.

Lenzen was in high glee and proposed to me to accompany him on a concert tour to Lenox and Stockbridge. I found out after the concert that while he was an artist of ability, he was addicted to drink, spending every penny for liquor, and when we met the next morning he was still in a semi-intoxicated state from his debauch of the night before. I therefore told him that I would not go with him; but he insisted and bothered me so much that, finally out of compassion, and reverence for his art, I consented to go to Lenox and accompany him there, provided we could secure a hall; and as he added that there was a young ladies' seminary there

where we might possibly be able to give a concert, I set out with him one fine morning. Lenzen feared that it would be difficult to obtain a piano in the little village, and I borrowed a guitar from his friend, the German, so that I might use it to accompany him in case we could not get a piano. We walked the entire distance, Lenzen with his 'cello and I with my borrowed guitar. On the road we made a halt close by a little running brook in a pretty valley, and under the shadow of the tall trees, with the birds for an audience, we had a fine rehearsal. Never shall I forget the *Adelaide* which Lenzen played for me by request after the rehearsal, how its soulful melody echoed through the trees, and how the little babbling brook seemed to catch and murmur the beautiful refrain!

Arriving in Lenox we found that there was no hall to be had, but we were offered some kind of a building with a low ceiling which was used for town meetings. This was offered gratuitously, and as a means of advertising Lenzen got the village storekeeper to print some notices on common brown wrapping paper, which we tacked up on the trees and barns in and around the village, also leaving a few of these placards at the seminary. Sorry am I to state that the concert was a big fizzle, both musically and financially, as there were not enough people in the town to make it profitable had they turned out *en masse*, but as less than a dozen came we played a few selections for them, then dismissed the congregation, giving them back their money. This *fiasco*, together with various reasons which my readers will readily understand, ended our concert tour, and

wishing old Lenzen good luck and bidding him farewell I departed for Sharon Springs, New York, having been told that it was a fashionable place, noted for its baths, and that it would be a good location for the sale of my wares.







## CHAPTER V

Sharon Springs, New York—Engagement with Mario-Grisi Opera Company, Castle Garden, New York City—Buckley Serenaders

I REACHED Palatine Bridge by rail, and footed it some nine miles to Sharon Springs, which forty years ago enjoyed great popularity and, aside from Saratoga Springs, was the most fashionable resort in the East, the many seashore hotels and splendidly appointed mountain retreats that are nowadays so much frequented being practically unknown. At that time a summer vacation was not deemed necessary for the middle class, and wealth and prosperity had just begun to dawn upon the nation. For this reason Saratoga and Sharon Springs were visited by those who were physically in need of the water or baths, and Sharon boasted of the largest sulphur spring in America, and its baths were famous. I cannot say that I was suffering from a torpid liver or chronic indigestion from high living, nor would I appear very truthful should I claim a gouty or rheumatic ailment brought on by too much wine and lack of exercise; these motives did not, therefore, enter into my mind when I selected Sharon as a good place to spend the summer. There were

various and equally strong reasons which prompted me to go there, viz., the information that around the baths I would find a Mecca for the sale of eyeglasses and spectacles, my informant evidently basing his theory on the fact that rheumatic affliction affected the eyesight.

It was a hot afternoon when I entered the little village, nestling, as it does, in a wooded valley nearly fifteen hundred feet above the level of the sea. I had made provision for a long stay at the Springs, and had forwarded my trunk, which contained my worldly possessions, consisting of my clothes and several musical instruments, by stage. As I walked down the one street I saw that it was lined upon either side with large hotels, and all of them seemed full of guests. I kept on to the baths, trying to find a place within my means, finally walking up the hill to the Pavilion Hotel, which I found to be the most exclusive hostelry of the village, and from whose piazza I looked out upon the beautiful Mohawk Valley with the Adirondacks for a background. Turning back I again strolled through the street, finally selecting a small boarding-house which seemed the most inviting of the lot and quite in keeping with my financial condition. I was fortunate in my selection, obtaining a good room, and as there was a small farm connected with the establishment, the table was always supplied with fresh vegetables.

After brushing up I went down to the baths and obtained permission to show my goods on the morrow, retracing my steps and stopping at the Eldridge House to buy a cigar. The guests must have been

at supper, and as there seemed to be no one on the large piazza I drew up a chair, and seating myself proceeded to enjoy my cigar. My thoughts carried me back to my beloved *Vaterland*, and as I recalled the many adventures I had passed through, a longing to again hear Beethoven's *Adelaide* came over me, and with it the image of sweet Marie whom I had regretfully left in far-away Russia; of her love for divine music, and I felt my eyes grow moist as I brooded upon cruel fate which had cast me in this distant land so far from home and friends. With it came the many talks I had enjoyed with my good mother in Coblenz, the few achievements which were subject to my hopes of bettering my position, and the great sadness and loneliness of my present life; for my successes in the Old World had been followed by the most cruel and bitter disappointments in this, the New, and my sadness became greater when I could not see any prospect of prosperity ahead.

After a while I felt better, and having finished my cigar I arose to go when, happening to look through the door into the parlor, I saw a pianoforte standing in one corner close to the wall. All at once my musical nature awoke and I longed to touch the keys of that instrument, and as I saw no guests around I quietly slipped into the parlor, and before I knew it I was seated at the piano and improvising. Quite forgetful of time, place, and my surroundings I played on, pouring out all the longings, all the pent-up anguish, of my soul. Suddenly I became conscious of the presence of others, and, turning, I was amazed to find the room quite full of ladies and

gentlemen. With cheeks aflame I started to leave, when I was seized by two young men, carried back to the piano, forced upon the stool, and commanded to play. Glancing over my shoulder I saw the guests formed for a quadrille, and with my two strong guards standing over me I played, and they danced for nearly two hours, when I was allowed to get up. As I was leaving, one of the young men thrust something into my vest pocket, and before I could remonstrate I was pushed out of the room and into the street.

I went home in the most distracted and disheartened manner, and taking the note from my vest pocket was surprised to find that it was a new five-dollar bill. I was so upset over the adventure, so disgusted with myself for belittling my art by playing for that madcap dance that I could not rest, and next morning I went, in a somewhat disheartened condition, to the spring, and placing my wares upon a table under a tree stood there patiently waiting for customers. I was not fortunate that day, for I did not sell anything, and I began to think I had again made a mistake in coming to Sharon Springs. Had I not had the five dollars in my pocket I am afraid I should have packed up and left then and there, and while the way of earning it was not an acceptable one I felt somewhat proud of my ability, though it seemed a disgraceful act to sacrifice what to me was sacred and to so prostitute it by playing for dancing, that, no matter what the need, I resolved never to do it again.

That evening I feared to go to the hotel, but I wanted to smoke, and before I knew what I was

doing I was standing before the glass case in the office of the Eldridge House selecting a cigar. As I was leaving, two gentlemen came to me and gave me to understand that my services were again wanted to furnish music for the merry dance, and when I positively declined to be the musician they seized me, one upon either side, and fairly dragging me into the room put me on the piano-stool, and standing over me commanded me to play. This peculiar performance on my part called forth a roar of laughter from the dancers, who were already formed for the Virginia Reel. Under the surveillance of this guard I was kept playing the whole evening, and it is needless to say that another five dollars found its way to my vest pocket in return for my services. My music must have pleased them, because the guests from the large hotel across the street came over and joined in the dance, and the Eldridge House became the centre of attraction of the place, Brown's Hotel opposite being practically deserted.

I found after several long and tedious days behind my stand at the spring that I could not sell any spectacles at Sharon, so I consented to play each evening for dancing at Eldridge's. One day Mr. Brown, the owner of the rival hostelry, approached me and offered me more money and my board if I would play each night in the parlor of his hotel, which offer I declined. Finding that he could not induce me to leave the house which had given me my first hearing, he finally entered into arrangements with Mr. Eldridge, and I played half the week at his hotel and the other half across the street,

receiving five dollars a night for my services. I spent a month or more at Sharon Springs; and having one hundred and twenty-five dollars in my pocket, and as the season was drawing to a close I thought of Pauline's song, *When the Swallows Homeward Fly*, and now, being a man of means, I returned to New York City full of hope and in the best of spirits.

Arriving in the metropolis I went to Mrs. L.'s, where I found a letter from Germany, telling me that a cousin of mine was living in the city and that he was a prosperous manufacturer. His address was also sent, the letter stating that he had recently been in Coblenz on a business trip, had called upon my mother, and hearing that I was in New York had requested that I come to see him. Acting upon the suggestion I called upon Mr. Heineman in Henry Street. He received me very cordially, and told me that he had crossed the ocean with Max Maretzek, the orchestral leader, and that he had spoken to him of me, telling him that I was an excellent 'cello player, and that Mr. Maretzek had told him that he would give me a place in his orchestra if I would call at his office. Through some unfortunate circumstance, Mr. Maretzek did not conduct that season, for another opera company, with Arditi as conductor, and Mario and Grisi as stars, began an engagement at Castle Garden; though when I called at the address given me by my cousin I did not know of this change of management. I was, however, offered a position in the orchestra as 'cello player, which I accepted.

Our contract called for three performances a week,

for which I received five dollars a performance. After several rehearsals, we opened on a warm evening in early September, giving a great performance of *Norma*—Mario and Grisi being enthusiastically received. I must not forget to say that when I appeared with my three-quarter 'cello for my first rehearsal I was greeted with shouts of laughter from the orchestra, and, greatly embarrassed, I resolved to buy another at once, although I was very fond of my little instrument, which had been made by Scheinlein of Langenfeld, one of the last of a family of celebrated violin-makers. I therefore called on the great George Gemünder, the world-renowned violin-maker, and asked him for a good, regular-sized violoncello. I found that he had an excellent instrument of his own make, and I bargained for it, giving my three-quarter Scheinlein and all the money I had earned playing for dances at Sharon Springs during the summer. I now felt to be myself again, having spent my money, which had burned a hole in my pocket and given me many sleepless night.

After a dozen performances at Castle Garden the orchestra was told that the Academy of Music had been finished, and that we should assemble there for a rehearsal at ten o'clock the next morning for the purpose of testing the acoustics of the new house, which we did, finding that the orchestra was too low, and a platform was therefore built so as to get more tonal power. I must here state that Theodore Thomas was one of the first violins of that orchestra. The opening night at the Academy was a grand event, and the opera was, if my memory serves me

right, *Semiramide*. Mario, the handsome silver-toned tenor, was in excellent voice, and Grisi, as *prima donna*, succeeded in captivating the cultured audience present.

I cannot recall those days without remembering an old violoncello player who sat beside me in the orchestra, and who also for a time boarded with me at Mrs. L.'s, and whom I shall call Ladymeyer. He was a good orchestral 'cello player, having played in the royal chapel for the King of Hanover. Ladymeyer was a man of about fifty-five years, a blond, though his fine golden hair was streaked with silver. He was greatly pleased with himself and his playing, and I took a few lessons of him while he was at Mrs. L.'s. He was very effeminate, and having a vivid imagination he believed that every woman who attended the opera and sat near him was enamored of his personal charms and his marvellous 'cello playing. His sublime conceit and attitude while playing were most offensive to the majority of the orchestra, for he was always trying to get up a flirtation with the ladies in the boxes and front rows, and used to call my attention to some one at every performance, until I, too, became quite disgusted with him. He would carry his flirtation to such an extent as to try to find out who the lady was, and if successful, as in some instances, he immediately sent her love poems, expressing his admiration and declaring his love. These characteristics were very noticeable when he had some small solo part to play, for he would invariably render it in a most love-sick manner.

Ladymeyer was also a poet, writing love lyrics



which he set to music and sung in quite as artistic a manner as did Pauline long ago in Berlin. Every evening after dinner, when we did not have a performance, he would insist on playing for me his *chef-d'œuvre*, a composition which he called *Mein Adagio mit den Glöckchen*, which he would render with the most languishing looks, while with one finger he would pick the strings, producing a harmonic which was intended for the Glöckchen. Ladymeyer was very fond of eating, and as he was fastidious in his tastes he concluded, after a short stay at Mrs. L.'s, to take rooms for himself and do his own cooking so that he might at least have good coffee. The old fellow was in love with his niece, who was a singer, and as Ladymeyer considered himself a great vocalist he undertook to teach her his art, and as he really loved her quite as much as he did himself, he finally married her.

Mrs. Ladymeyer had much the same musical ability as her husband, and when I heard her sing years after, at a concert given by them in New Haven, Connecticut, he playing the *Adagio mit den Glöckchen*, and she warbling the most inane love songs, I felt my old affection for Ladymeyer and his art return. As this musical Beau Brummel always leaned towards the youthful side of life, and although he was a man of fifty-five when we played the 'cello together with the Mario-Grisi company, unless some unforeseen circumstance has come over him, figuring on that basis, he must still be alive, playing the *Adagio* and singing his love poems in declining tones.

While thus engaged in playing for the opera three

evenings a week, and having time to do something else, I one day took out my case of spectacles and, strolling down town, entered a wholesale house and was showing my wares when a man stepped up to me, saying, "Hullo, there, Steinert, I didn't know that you were an optician," and turning I saw Herr Boehm, the first clarionet player in the orchestra. Without another word I closed my case and left the shop, and never again did I peddle spectacles. As a pastime for the evenings when disengaged I formed a string quartet, and really enjoyed our meetings. One afternoon, when we were practising, a gentleman came in and was presented to me as Mr. Buckley, the manager of Buckley's Serenaders, and a fine violinist. Mr. Fred Buckley was much interested in our work, and asked to be allowed to play first violin occasionally when that member of the quartet was absent. This favor was granted, and as Mr. Buckley found great enjoyment in quartet playing and the class of music we studied, we soon became well acquainted, and he finally offered me an engagement as violoncello player in his theatre on Broadway. As the operatic season was drawing to a close, and I had no engagement, I accepted his offer and joined the "Buckley Minstrels." The orchestra was made up of a pianist, one first violin, one second violin, viola, 'cello, and double bass, and the members were not obliged to black up, being independent of the ebony-faced artists playing the songs and the last part of the programme, which was usually an operatic burlesque. This engagement was for a while very pleasant, and I had plenty of time to improve myself otherwise.

The pianist of our orchestra, a Mr. Blitz, was a most gifted musician, possessing a love for his art that stamped him as an extraordinary artist. Blitz had a face that suggested Rembrandt, or I might say the faces of the Netherland School of artists. He was of medium stature, well built and muscular, having the most beautiful hands, which were always well kept. His conceit was as sublime as Lady-meyer's, for he thought that he was the Adonis of the universe. While his ambition in art was most commendable, I must say that the force in the direction of his beauty was looked upon by him as far beyond his art, and therefore he felt himself to be the great attraction of our show, and did not hesitate to say that the "Buckley Serenaders," with their jokes and shining carbon faces, with their dramatic art in burlesque, with their banjo playing and their remarkable dancing were nothing, and that he, with his beautiful head, his lustrous, expressive eyes, and fine appearance, was the central focus of the entertainment. In his contract with Mr. Buckley he stipulated that his grand piano should be placed upon an elevated platform so that his profile would be seen, feeling sure that if he should deign to turn and show his full face he could captivate the fair sex instantaneously. So sure was he of his great importance that he would gaze at the ladies with his languishing, expressive eyes, frequently taking one of his beautiful hands from the keys to sweep back his long hair, which hung far down on his neck. After every performance he used to tell me of his conquests, which I could not deny, because, sitting as low down as I did playing my 'cello, and

with my back to the audience, I knew that I could not in any way compete with him, although in those days I, too, affected long hair. Once I tried to look around and sweep back my hair as I so often saw Blitz do, but greatly to the detriment of my 'cello playing, and though I did not give up in despair I submitted in a lamblike spirit, bewailing the fate that made me a sawer of catgut instead of a manipulator of the ivory keys. Blitz, because of his fanciful conquests, made himself very disagreeable to Mr. Buckley, making the most absurd demands, which were usually granted because he was such an excellent pianist.

I must, however, state that Blitz was not altogether the attraction of the show, and that while the ensemble helped to make the name of the "Buckley Serenaders" household words, the man who really was in himself a whole attraction was Mr. Fred Buckley, the leader and violinist of the orchestra. Young Buckley was undisputably handsome, very modest, and with it all a remarkable artist. He had an advantage over Blitz and the rest in that he went upon the stage and played solos upon his violin, and it cannot be denied that he made many conquests among the fair sex, for he daily received dozens of love-letters from those who had listened to his marvellous playing. Blitz never could understand why the ladies of the negro minstrel audience could be so ignorant as to prefer Buckley, who was only a violinist, to him, so that a feeling of rivalry sprang up between them which was to the disadvantage of the pianist; in fact it soon attained such magnitude that Blitz resigned upon several occasions, and only

through the diplomacy and judgment of his rival resumed his place in the orchestra. Blitz came of an excellent family, having, besides his parents, two brothers and a sister.

While living with Mrs. L., I became acquainted with an elderly gentleman, by name Dr. F. He was an old bachelor and would have been a suitable character for a monastery. In his early life he had been a school-teacher, and later on, while residing in Munich, the tutor of Mrs. L.'s children. He combined with the characteristics of the teacher much pedantry; and as school-teachers often, on account of mingling with children instead of men, have a tendency to judge the world from the standpoint of the inexperienced, and are inclined to revel in the thought that they are the leaders of the world, influenced by their autocratic position over a class of humanity that is unripe and unused to the battles of life, so Dr. F. looked upon the great world from a juvenile pedestal, and in this respect he was not unlike Blitz when he considered his beauty. Dr. F. found something in me to interest him, and he gave me much wholesome advice, speaking to me in a fatherly way, telling me what it was best for me to do to acquire a position in business and society. As I had been trained from my youth to receive even the smallest favor with gratitude, I listened to his teaching and profited by it. He told me that I must mingle more in society, and advised me to frequent the gatherings of the many German families held weekly, and finally suggested that I marry and settle down. Through his intercession I attended certain social entertainments held

Sunday evenings, where dramatic, literary, and musical programs were rendered which were not of a strictly professional character, but given by young men and women in private life who possessed some talent. The gathering-place was in Orchard Street, in a medium-sized hall up one flight of stairs. The hall was long and narrow, with low ceiling, and at one end was a low stage which could be removed. Here our amateur performances were given, and these entertainments were very popular, and being free, the hall was usually filled to overflowing, and I met many pleasant people.

One Sunday evening I entered the hall a little late, and I had to stand away back by the door, where I could hear but could not see the stage. There were recitations, followed by a piano solo, one or two songs of ordinary musical merit, when all at once I heard the sound of a soprano voice which reverberated like magic through my whole body—a voice that was clear, soft, and elastic, with a tone gradation that was simply marvellous. I immediately recognized the voice as one that I had heard before; even the enunciation, which was so faultless and poetically wedded to those magical tones, was familiar to me. In a state of ecstasy I lost my intellectual powers, which should have guided me and allowed me to discriminate between right and wrong. In fact all that pertained to thought vanished, and I knew I was listening to Beethoven's *Adelaide*, which seemed the theme of my life. Had peerless Marie come across the sea to cheer me in my loneliness? Had her love for me finally conquered her love for art? These questions

took possession of me, and I tried to see the fair singer. Greatly excited, I forced my way through the ranks until I could see her. Alas! my hopes were shattered. It was was not Marie, it was only her voice that spoke to me through another medium, for I had never looked upon the face of the singer before.

As I stepped towards the platform I was amazed to find Blitz at the piano, and with great emotion I asked him the name of the woman who had so exquisitely rendered the *Adelaide*. In a cool and phlegmatic way he answered, "It is my sister." The young woman was petite and dainty. She had big soulful eyes and soft wavy hair which was as black as a raven's wing. With my heart beating wildly I begged an introduction, and I never can remember the words of our conversation, for my soul was full of the haunting melody of the *Adelaide*. I accompanied her home after the concert, and for weeks frequented the house, in love with her marvellous voice. After a suitable time I asked her hand from her parents and brother; but as I was a poor struggling 'cello player, they would not consent, and; so without ever telling her of my love, I ceased to visit the house, and in my despair sighed for that peace and consolation which seemed to vanish and leave me to drift aimlessly along in the current of misfortune.





## CHAPTER VI

Business with Mr. Wolf—Robbery—Illness—Tour with “Buckley Serenaders”—Music Club in Savannah, Georgia

ALTHOUGH I had a fair income from my work with the minstrel company, I did not now enjoy it, for there was a certain monotony connected with it which was at variance with my tastes, and which would have acted similarly upon any one in my position, for I had to listen every night to the same jokes, the same songs, the same burlesque, the same applause, in fact I anticipated the laughs and knew just what to expect at the end of each number, until the responsiveness of the audience became almost mechanical to me. For instance, I knew just when the interlocutor would ask the end man, “How do you feel to-night, Johnson?” and the reply, “I feel high.”—“How high?”—“Shanghai.” This was one of the jokes that I heard nightly for two years.

I now lived farther uptown in a very excellent house which was presided over by an English-woman, a Mrs. W., who claimed to be a widow. It was there that I made the acquaintance of a fellow boarder by the name of Wolf, a man some



years my senior, who was very fond of music, and who, unfortunately for me, played on the violin. I have not to this day made out whether it was lack of talent or insufficient training that made him such a disagreeable player. I tried hard to pity the poor man, while I found some consolation in the fact that he was an awfully nice fellow, full of sentiment and kindness. I could never understand why he was so fond of me. It may have been my good looks (?), my humor, or possibly the way I played the violoncello. To judge him by his musical abilities, I am forced to admit that he considered me a good player, and I rejoice in the fact because he was an exception to the rule. Our landlady, who was exceedingly good-looking, tried very hard to interest us by her amiability, and while she was loath to bemoan the fate which left her a lone widow in a lone world, I am inclined to think that her husband when alive might also have bemoaned the fate which tempted her to leave a life of single blessedness. During our residence under her roof she flirted with us both, ready to accept the first bidder. Finally, in her anxiety to clinch the bargain, she became so persistent that we decided that it was best to leave before it was too late.

Mr. Wolf was a travelling man in the interest of a large wholesale establishment, and commanded a good salary, and as he was anxious to increase his income, he suggested that we go into partnership in the optical goods business, he to furnish the capital and I the experience. I always had an eye to business, and that morning I had two, and we closed the bargain by renting a store on Sixth Avenue

between 26th and 27th Streets, and immediately took possession of it. The location was considered a fine one, and we expected to do a great business, but after two months we decided that while the location was all right, something was wrong with the business. Mr. Wolf invested about six hundred dollars cash in the enterprise, while I turned over all of the optical goods which I possessed in addition to my services, while we had on consignment a lot of handsome goods, given not on account of our financial standing, but because the dealers believed in our honesty. During the day I waited upon the few customers, playing with the minstrels each night.

Our shop was divided into two sections, consisting of the shop proper, while the space behind the partition was utilized as my living apartments. The limitations of my purse did not permit of my buying a carpet, but I invested in a small iron bedstead, with cheap mattress and the necessary bedding, two chairs of wood, and a washstand with the required toilet articles. The only artistic element was a thundering big old-fashioned grand piano, which I rented, a music-stand, and my violoncello—thus giving to the humble room something of a musical atmosphere. While I did not attract many customers I enjoyed a number of visitors, musical *confrères*, who found pleasure in a cigarette, cigar, or pipe, and music. Everything was on the temperance plan, and, besides the social element, our congeniality found expression in the playing of quartets, duets, and trios.

One Sunday evening, returning from a quartet expedition held in the room of a friend, I found

that during my absence our entire stock of optical goods had been stolen, thieves having entered and taken everything except the bedroom furnishings. This was indeed a great blow, and I well remember how bitterly I bewailed our loss, and the satisfaction I felt in the small amount of money in my pocket-book, which I counted and put back in my trousers' pocket just before going to bed. I was awake for some time, but finally sank into a deep sleep. When I awoke the next morning the sun was streaming in, and I was astonished to find the window open. With a crushing sense of loss I hurriedly dressed, happy that I had sufficient money left to provide myself with food for the week; but to my horror, when I put my hand into my trousers' pocket I found that my money was gone, and in my unfortunate position I threw myself upon the bed and wept like a child. As I did not have a cent of money in the world with which to buy myself a breakfast, I appealed to the good German restaurateur who had supplied me with my meals since leaving Mrs. W.'s, and who gladly trusted me for the amount of my breakfast. After that I hastened to the opticians whose goods we had on consignment, told them of the robbery, and assured them that my partner and myself would try from time to time to repay them for their loss.

Mr. Wolf returned in a few days to find that we were bankrupt. Upon hearing of the robbery he extended to me his kindness and sympathy. Detectives had in the meantime been put upon the track of the thieves, who were finally captured, and several valuable articles such as gold-mounted opera-



ENGLISH HARPSICHORD. TWO KEYBOARDS. FIVE OCTAVES.

Made by Jacobus Kirkman, 1769.



and eye-glasses and lorgnettes were found and restored to the opticians.

The misfortunes which befell me, together with my hopeless love for the singer of the *Adelaide* reacted, and I found myself in a very serious state of mind, so I concluded to stay with the minstrels and to live in accordance with my limited salary, for I knew that I was in duty bound to repay my obligations. I therefore set out to find a room, and as the bass player of the orchestra, a Mr. Fritchie, occupied a flat on the fifth floor of a large tenement house on Orchard Street, I appealed to him, and he rented me a small room.

One Sunday morning shortly after the robbery I invited my string quartet there for the purpose of enjoying a substantial quartet feast. And it was one, for we sat down at nine A.M. and played until midnight, stopping only to eat and drink an occasional glass of beer. After my friends left I threw myself upon the bed exhausted, and the quartet feast was followed by one of the most restless and wretched nights I have ever spent. The excitement of playing and my unfortunate position resulted in a severe illness, for when morning dawned I could not get up, and I was burning with fever. Being unable to play at Buckley's, my financial resources stopped, and as I needed medicine and medical assistance my position was far from an enviable one. I suffered agony for a few days until my good landlady, Mrs. Fritchie, finally found a doctor in the neighborhood who pronounced my case one of typhoid fever, and for several days I lay at death's door, and I am sure that I would have died had it

not been for the care of this good woman. And after the delirium had passed my customary will power reasserted itself, and I was enabled to throw off the disease, and finally to get up and about again. When convalescing I remembered that, by the advice of Dr. F., I had joined a society which promised to care for its members in sickness and death, and so I wrote the doctor, telling him of my helpless condition, and he succeeded in obtaining a twenty-dollar gold piece which he brought to me. My complete recovery followed slowly, and I accepted Mr. Buckley's offer to travel with his band for the next five months over a large section of country.

We opened in Bridgeport, Connecticut, playing an engagement the next night in New Haven in Brewster's Hall on the corner of State and Chapel Streets. I had, residing at that time in the "City of Elms," a friend by the name of Mrs. Feldman, whom I had met at Mrs. L.'s some time before, and who requested me to call upon her should I ever visit New Haven. After we arrived and were comfortably settled at the Tontine Hotel, I remembered the invitation and was on the point of leaving the hotel to make the call when I met one of the orchestra, who told me that Blitz, the pianist, had absolutely refused to play again and had already left for New York, and that Mr. Buckley feared that the performance could not take place, as there was no one to play the piano. I thought the matter over for a moment, then went to Mr. Buckley and told him that I knew something about the pianoforte and would play that evening. Mr. Buckley evidently doubted my ability, but as

there was no one to play the solos of Mr. J. R. Thomas, the composer and ballad-singer, and Mr. Simpson, the tenor, who had no end of work, to say nothing of our soprano, Miss Miller, he called a rehearsal with me at the piano. I must have given satisfaction, for at the close of the rehearsal Mr. Buckley was most profuse in his compliments, and we agreed that for the road performances I should play the piano, and a 'cellist was immediately sent for from New York, and he joined us in New Haven.

It was a little after eleven when I left the hall, and I at once set out to make the promised call upon Mrs. Feldman. She received me cordially and invited me to dine with her and meet her husband, which I did. At dinner both she and Mr. Feldman told me that I should marry and settle down, and added that they had a most charming acquaintance in the city to whom they would be delighted to present me. Her name was Miss Carolina Dreyfuss, and she was a teacher of French in Miss Bingham's fashionable school on York Square. I expressed my willingness to meet her, but demurred because of my shabby clothes, whereupon Mr. Feldman said that he had a clothing store on State Street, and perhaps he might be able to fit me out. I therefore went with him to his establishment, agreeing to return for Mrs. Feldman at three o'clock. I bought a dark-green coat, cut according to the fashion of that period, and a handsome yellow satin vest. With this I wore white trousers and a high stock with flaring, pointed ends which stuck out far beyond my chin. With my silk hat and cane I felt that I was most correctly



and elegantly dressed, that is, all but my shoes; so leaving Mr. Feldman I entered a little shoe store of Isaac Strauss, and giving him my old ones to patch, I purchased a new pair, and with a most important air called for Mrs. Feldman, and together we set out for York Square.

We were kept waiting for a few moments in the parlor, then Miss Dreyfuss entered, and when I arose to greet her I was amazed to find in her the agreeable governess whom I had so often met in Coblenz. Miss Dreyfuss was delighted to see me again, and when I left she accepted an invitation to attend our performance that evening. I called for her, and she, with Mrs. Feldman, thoroughly enjoyed the evening of mirth, minstrelsy, and song, and as we were walking home after the entertainment I told her that I had resolved to marry and settle down, and asked her if she would marry me then and there. With becoming modesty, she said that she would think it over and let me know, and with this understanding we parted.

While on our journey, being in the neighborhood of New York, we were assigned one week for rest, and to arrange for a new burlesque; but one day we received notice that we would play a night stand in Newark, New Jersey. The company carried a man whose business it was to look after the transportation, so that all we were expected to do was to be on hand at the train at the time scheduled for leaving, Mr. Short, for that was his name, looking after the music, etc. We were told upon reaching Newark that the burlesque that evening would be *Sonnambula*, and as we were a little late in arriving

we proceeded at once to the hall and took our places in the orchestra. The parts were all arranged on the racks, but we did not take the trouble to look at them. Mr. Buckley came in shortly, took his place, and as it was nearly time to ring up the curtain, picked up his score. A cry of horror came from his lips, and with a white, set face he turned around and told us that the parts on the racks were those of the *Bohemian Girl* instead of *Sonnambula*. It was a critical moment, for the rest of the music was in New York, and the company was dressed and ready to go on in *Sonnambula*. What was to be done? Mr. Buckley, who possessed a wonderful memory, and whose duty it was to rehearse the orchestra, knew every opera by heart, and said that he knew his part, but that he did not expect the rest of the orchestra to play the score without notes. It was in this state of suspense that I assured him that I would trust to my memory to play the piano part if I could rely upon his guidance and assistance. As there was nothing else to be done, we played the entire opera together, and I am happy to state that the performance went with great *éclat*.

We played for five months, travelling as far west as Cincinnati, returning to New York in time for the opening of the season. During all this time I had heard nothing from Miss Dreyfuss and my proposal, and in fact I had not thought much about it, for we had travelled constantly, and my mind had been taken up with other matters. One day, while standing talking with several members of the company in front of the theatre on Broadway, three ladies passed, and in one of them I recognized my friend

Miss Dreyfuss. Of course I hastened to speak to her, and she presented me to her sisters, following the introduction with an invitation to call, as she was then living with her family in the city. I availed myself of her cordial invitation, and soon became a frequent visitor at her home, and a suitor for her hand. Her father consented to an engagement, and I now determined to settle down and become a serious-minded citizen; so, after carefully thinking the matter over, I resigned my position with the minstrels and selected Baltimore, Maryland, as the city for my work as a music-teacher, being assured that it was an Eldorado for a good piano teacher. I was also encouraged by the fact that I had a cousin residing there who conducted a large fur establishment. I advised him of my plan to settle in his city, and he kindly offered me a home with him free of charge.

I left New York full of hope, and arrived in Baltimore, where, despite my efforts and those of my cousin, I was unsuccessful in obtaining pupils, and after spending three most trying months there I received a letter from a gentleman in Savannah, Georgia, who owned a large musical establishment in that city. The letter stated that while North on a business trip the writer had asked Mr. Schirmer, the great music publisher, to recommend an efficient young man to fill the position of clerk in his store, and that Mr. Schirmer had spoken very highly of me. Mr. Berg thereupon offered me the position, with a salary of six hundred dollars a year, and also said that he had arranged for me to play the organ in the Whitaker Square Baptist Church, with an

additional salary of three hundred dollars. This offer seemed a munificent one to me, and I accepted it, starting for Savannah early in the fall, and for the first time in my life I appeared in the rôle of music clerk, piano salesman, and repairer of accordions, banjos, guitars, and violins.

Savannah was even at that time quite a musical centre, having musicians who played orchestral instruments, and one day there arrived in our midst Carl Vieweg as organist at Christ Church. He was an excellent violinist, and the musicians of the city under his direction formed an orchestra called the Mozart Club. There were perhaps twenty-five members, and all of the orchestral instruments were represented except the oboes and bassoons. As there was only one French horn player, I attempted to play the second French horn instead of the 'cello, for there were besides myself two excellent 'cello players in the organization. Our concerts were well patronized, and the élite of that exclusive Southern city interested themselves in the club, and it was a financial as well as an artistic success. My employer, Mr. Berg, was a fair viola player, and with Mr. Vieweg's assistance as first violin, another friend as second violin, and myself as 'cellist, we formed a string quartet, and enjoyed many delightful hours together.

There resided in Savannah at that time a wealthy cotton merchant, a Mr. Niles Haversham, who was a flutist and a musical enthusiast. His wife was a pianist of marked ability, and it was at his splendid mansion that we spent many musical evenings, playing quintets and sextets. While I did not have the

pleasure of meeting Mr. Haversham after our last musical evening, which occurred over forty years ago, it is a deplorable fact that, on account of the war and the misfortunes which followed, my noble host lost his entire fortune.

I shall never forget the kindness shown me at this time by several gentlemen who resided in Savannah but who were born and came to the United States from Burg-Haslach, a town adjacent to Scheinfeld, viz., the three brothers Meinhard. Many a time did we sit together in remembrance of the beautiful country which gave us birth, and as they, like myself, were not born with golden spoons in their mouths, and, similarly to me, had to struggle for their very existence in a far-off country, away from the influence of home and the sweet family ties, our meetings were imbued with the hopes which bring men and women to greater success, and our association is one of the pleasant memories of my life in the sunny South.

Being now comfortably settled in Savannah, I concluded to marry, and requested my *fiancée* to come South for that purpose, which she did, and the 7th of January, 1857, was set for our wedding. I had quite forgotten that upon that evening the Mozart Club was to give one of the season's concerts, and as I would not think of postponing the happy event, and as the bad second horn player was of as much importance to the success of the concert as of the wedding, I decided to play my horn on the very evening when I entered upon the happy state of wedlock. After the ceremony I invited the bridal party to the concert, and the day will ever be

a memorable one in my domestic and musical life. It will not be amiss to state here the dowry brought me by my wife, which consisted of the sum of twenty-five dollars. As for myself, I could not offer quite as much, for my financial condition was considerably below par. Through the assistance of my employer, Mr. Berg, I obtained enough furniture to fit out our small house, and we started housekeeping with great promise, and were very happy.

While my good wife did not possess such musical abilities as to be in perfect harmony with the musical side of my nature, I found in her a woman of superior intellect, strong character, modest in her bearing, and having a full complement of those requirements that contribute to a happy home. She had undoubted literary ability, being well acquainted with the literature of all periods, and as she combined with it the sweetness and tenderness of a true and affectionate helpmate, she brought to my life much peace and happiness. She, like myself, had been forced to struggle from her girlhood to improve her mind under conditions the most trying, teaching school in France when hardly out of her teens, and when she grew older she had been called upon to help in the support of her parents. She was charitable and religious, a devoted daughter and wife. In appearance, she belonged to the brunette type, having dark and expressive eyes, with a sweet mouth which showed great firmness and strength of character. She was blessed with a lot of patience and forbearance, and while her face in conversation was animated and vivacious, in repose it was haunted by a look of unutterable sadness.

She was a beautiful, graceful woman, with a low, sweet voice that was always musical. She was fully aware of the path that lay before us, but she looked with admiration upon my abilities and knew how to stimulate them in a masterly but womanly way. While there was but little hope as to our future prosperity, we both looked at least with bright eyes and cheerful hearts to the far-off blessings which we felt sure lay before us, and even in our very poverty we were happy.

The state of musical culture which then prevailed in that section of the South was not in keeping with the musical culture which I had found in my travels in Europe, and for that reason what I am about to relate did not surprise me. One day a young man, by the name of Farrell, applied to me for instruction upon the pianoforte. He was about twenty-one years old, and was associated with his brother in the grocery business. He was also the leader of the choir in the church where I played the organ, and under whose auspices I was engaged, so I undertook to teach him the art of piano playing. I have always looked upon Mozart's *Don Juan* as the gospel of lyric opera, and for that reason I kept the score of this immortal work on my piano, and every day I revelled in the beauty of the heavenly composition. One evening when Farrell came in for his lesson, he noticed the score on my music-rack, and in an inquisitive way said, as he pointed to it, "What is that, Professor?"—a title which I must have obtained from the University of the Grocery. I told him that it was a musical composition of great merit by Mozart, whereupon he said, "Who is this Mozart?"



VERTICAL GRAND. SIX OCTAVES.  
Made by André Stein, 1779.



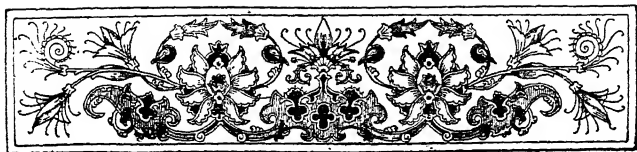


Does he live in New York?" I hastened to enlighten his ignorance by saying that Mozart was born in Salzburg, that he had died many years ago, but that his name was known all over the world as a great musician. "Great musician, eh?" said Farrell. "You are a great musician, too. Now then, what's the difference between you and Mozart?" I tried in vain to explain the small difference that existed between us, but I fear it was useless, for Farrell continued to look upon me as a musician quite equal to the master.

My good fortune in thus obtaining pupils turned out in the end to be my misfortune, for I must state that my employer, Mr. Berg, was also a music-teacher, devoting most of his time to teaching, and as some of his pupils came to me for instruction, a feeling of rivalry sprang up between us which endangered my position, and as it increased every day my situation was made decidedly unpleasant for me. One day I told Mr. Berg, for it was near the end of my first year with him, that I wished to resign, having with sincere regret noticed the unpleasantness which of late had come between us, and for that reason I had decided to devote all of my spare time to the teaching of music. This bit of news seemed to give Mr. Berg great uneasiness, for he probably expected that I might be a strong competitor in a field which he had so long enjoyed alone; but when I added that I would not choose to remain in Savannah; that as my wife was a fine French teacher I had decided to try and get a position in some ladies' seminary where she could also teach, he seemed relieved, and kindly offered to find such a place for

me. Through his good offices I was offered the chair of music in a young ladies' school at Thomasville, Georgia, and as it seemed to be just what I was looking for, I hastened to accept it. Before leaving Savannah my wife presented me with a son, Henry, and as she was unable to accompany me, for the trip was at that time a tedious one, being made partly by stage, I left her in Savannah and started out for Thomasville alone.\* When I saw the place I felt the keenest disappointment, and regretted that I had ever left Savannah.





## CHAPTER VII

Teacher of Music in Thomasville, Georgia—Visit to Colonel Bailey's Plantation—Tallahassee—Athens, Georgia—War of the Rebellion

THOMASVILLE was at that time a little town which I felt could offer me nothing, accustomed as I was to living in populous cities; and when I was directed to the seminary proper, I was simply amazed, for I saw before me a single brick house, which contained several recitation rooms for the day pupils, those coming from out of town having to find board in the village. The school buildings stood upon an elevation, surrounded by a wooded grove, and quite apart from the town, while the music department was a small frame building of one little room, about one hundred feet away from the seminary. Despite my feelings, I hastened to present myself to the principal of the school, a maiden lady by the name of Hansel. She received me cordially, telling me that she had a dozen pupils whom I should instruct in pianoforte playing, and that my fee would consist in so much money for each pupil; but noting my look of disappointment, she hastened to assure me that if I proved as competent

an instructor as my predecessor, Mr. Gibson, the number of pupils would be appreciably increased.

I cannot say that I was greatly pleased with my prospects, but I felt that I must make the best of it, and take my first step in the profession I had determined to follow; so swallowing my pride I began my teaching. I found that my pupils were young women who had never studied the pianoforte, and that their interest in its study was simply for the purpose of learning how to play a few pieces for their own amusement and the pleasure of their friends. I assure you that at no time was my position an enviable one, and I was greatly disturbed one day when Miss Hansel came to the studio and politely informed me that she did not approve of my method of teaching; that my pupils had scarcely advanced and were unable to "play a piece"; that Mr. Gibson's way of teaching was entirely different, he having trained his pupils especially for the quarterly exhibition, where they were expected to appear with credit to themselves, every pupil being able to play or sing acceptably. She further stated that upon this entertainment depended very largely the success of the school, and unless my pupils were ready to appear and do credit to themselves at the coming exhibition she would have no further need of my services. Before leaving she told me that Mr. Gibson always accompanied each pupil upon some instrument, which not only gave the pupil greater confidence but also gave more tone color to the performance.

Our conversation terminated by Miss Hansel giving me strict orders to begin training the pupils at once, which I agreed to do, but I made up my

mind then and there to sever my connection with the school as professor of music at the end of the quarter. I decided, however, that as a grand *finale* I would show the worthy maiden lady my ability as a useful assistant to my unskilful pupils. I remembered full well old Dazian's instruction in Scheinfeld, and I thought that he would have found a congenial field for his teaching in Thomasville. The next day I brought out my violin, violoncello, flute, accordion, guitar, banjo, and cornet, and immediately my pupils became interested in the one simple piece I taught them. To my joy, when the day for the exhibition arrived they carried off the honors, and at the close of the performance Miss Hansel and the patrons of the school congratulated me on my unprecedented success,—I was the great musician of Thomasville, Georgia, a worthy successor to Mr. Gibson, and I was offered the position for life.

Although my professional life was far from enviable, my domestic and social condition was equally bad. I boarded with a man named Tyson, the family consisting of the old gentleman, who was about sixty-five, a son, and a daughter, and, while I had a comfortable room, the table differed greatly from that offered in Berlin, Paris, St. Petersburg, or New York, and as the use of the cooking-stove was not in vogue the culinary department was very primitive and did not permit of many delicacies. A building detached from the living apartments and having a big fireplace was used as a kitchen, and connected with the fireplace was a large brick oven for roasting the meat which we occasionally indulged in. Over the fire, suspended from a crane, was a

large pot, which was used one day for bacon and greens, the next for greens and bacon, while our bread consisted of a mixture of corn-meal, molasses, and salt, which was baked in the pot. Soup was an unknown quantity, while fresh meat, as I have already stated, was a luxury, and depended upon the killing of a steer in the neighborhood and the buying of a quarter of it, which after a few meals was usually salted and kept for the use of future generations. As for vegetables, aside from the tomato, sweet potato, cabbage, and an occasional dish of Irish potatoes, there was nothing else to be found in the gardens of Thomasville. Granulated sugar was not known in those days, but the beverage called coffee, and which was indistinctly related to that product, was sweetened with brown sugar or molasses ; in fact, the latter was a very popular sweet, and was eaten in large quantities with the morning hoe-cake. Occasionally a chicken was sacrificed to vary the monotony. Pies were also indulged in, but I did not consider it advisable to tempt Providence by trying them, although I've since regretted that I did not take one piece and note the effect for the benefit of my successor if nothing more.

Had it not been for a German confectioner residing there, I am sure I would have shrivelled up and blown away. This man derived a fair income by baking and selling bread, increasing his yearly earnings by selling fancy goods and temperance drinks. This good German I felt to be my only friend, for Mr. Stark in his early days before coming to Thomasville had been initiated in the art of soup-making,

and he had heard of a beefsteak with onions. He was a bachelor; and as once upon a time he had been a barber, and in consequence knew how to play the guitar, his love for the divine art—I do not now refer to his tonsorial but to his musical art—caused him to appear in the rôle of an humanitarian. When one day in despair I told him the condition of my inner man, which Tyson's table had brought about, he seized his guitar and played a fandango, thus displaying his virtuosity, and I, being the audience and realizing what there was in store for me if I praised his efforts, found plenty of neat and pretty compliments at the close of his performance. In exchange for my liberal praise I never failed to receive a hearty repast, consisting of a plate of good rich soup, and a deliciously browned pfannekuchen, while, if I went into ecstasies over the fandango, he felt constrained to go to his little stove—the only one in all Thomasville—and cook me a beefsteak smothered in onions. I have since regretted this deception, but it was at that time my only chance, and so I sacrificed Mr. Stark that I might live to inflict upon you these reminiscences.

My wife having now recovered from her illness, I felt a longing to see her and my infant son, so I wrote her to come to Thomasville, which she did. As my boarding-place at Mr. Tyson's could not afford us sufficient room, I started out in search of a small house which I might rent and go to house-keeping. I found a little one-story cabin in the woods, and as it seemed the best house within the limits of my pocketbook I rented it on the spot. The building was raised above the ground on stumps



of trees and was not boarded up, leaving a space of some feet underneath for additional coolness in summer and also to keep the place from becoming damp. As I have already stated, the little cabin stood away from the town in the pine woods, and although I feared that it might at times be lonely, we sent for our household furniture in Savannah, and were soon settled in our new abode. The front steps led directly into the living-room, a door communicated with another apartment a little smaller, while in the rear there was a space evidently intended as a storeroom. A large fireplace served to furnish us with heat, and was also used for cooking, for it had the customary long iron bar from which was suspended the iron pot. We had plenty of bacon, corn-meal, coffee, eggs, and chickens, but there was a dearth of fresh beef, which was scarce and high, and which was brought irregularly to the town by the planters, who used to halt under a little summer-house in the centre of the principal street, and ring a bell to let the beef-eaters know of their arrival. I always made it a point to stand on the corner on the days when one was expected, so as not to trust to the ringing of the bell and perhaps get left after all. My good wife knew how to conform to the limitations of the provisional government then extant, and I shall never forget the really fine steaks she prepared for me after my return from an onslaught on the beef market. One day while reading I was startled by a cry from the front room where my wife was engaged in preparing supper. Throwing down my paper I rushed to her and found her dress a mass of flame, her light gown having

caught fire from the blazing log over which she was cooking. I ran back, seized the bedding from the bed, threw Mrs. Steinert down on the floor, and quickly enveloping her in the blankets smothered the flame, and she escaped with a few slight burns. By a strange coincidence the same thing had happened at the seminary but a few weeks before, when one of my pupils who was standing in front of the fireplace found her thin muslin dress on fire, and I saved her life by covering her with a large floor rug. Miss Jones, for that was her name, instead of being grateful to me for saving her life, seemed to take an intense dislike to me, and from that day she became my bitterest enemy.

The mode of life in our cabin in the sunny South lost much of its charm because we were constantly annoyed, especially at night, by a perfect stampede of pigs under our house, and this, with its lonely location in the woods, quite away from neighbors, and the necessity of carrying all of the water for some distance, made us decide to move. We gave up housekeeping and went to live with a widow, a Mrs. Foster, who furnished us with comfortable lodgings in her pretty home in the village. Mrs. Foster's family consisted of a charming grown daughter and a young son; and the daughter took guitar lessons of me in part payment for our board, thus reducing our expenses.

One day, while giving Miss Foster her guitar lesson in the sitting-room, her brother Bertie, a lad of about eight or nine years, entered, and, crossing, disappeared through the door into an adjoining room, where in one corner stood an old army musket which

was loaded. Happening to glance up, I saw the boy in the door with the gun in his hand, which he could not lift, as it was very heavy. Before I could rise and go to him the gun exploded, and the bullet lodged in the ceiling directly over my head; and when another and more serious shooting affair happened the Sunday following I decided that I was never to die by accident. It was a lovely, balmy afternoon, and I was walking down the wide village street, leisurely smoking my cigar and speculating upon the future, when I was startled by a sharp report, and I felt a bullet whiz past my face. I stopped and looked across the street, where I saw a man greatly excited again loading his gun, and as I looked he ran towards me, and I dodged and barely escaped the second shot. Without a word I turned on my heel and started on the run up the street, the man in hot pursuit. Finally he caught up with me and exclaimed excitedly, "Oh, I beg your pardon. What did I do? Are you hurt? I am so sorry, but I thought you were the scoundrel who ran away with my wife, and I had made up my mind to kill you. Thanks to my poor markmanship, you are safe." He was very profuse in his apologies, but I was not to be pacified so easily, and had him arrested, for I believed him a dangerous man to be at large. After a mock hearing he was allowed to go free because no one was killed, though it was not his fault that there was n't.

While boarding with Mrs. Foster I met some pleasant people, and, among others, a man by the name of Perkins who conducted a large store in the village, and who visited New York City yearly for

the purpose of purchasing goods. Returning from such a visit he came in to tell us all about it. We greeted him cordially, delighted to have news of the metropolis, and I asked him how he had enjoyed his trip. He replied that he had had a fine time and hated to come home. I thereupon said, "What did you see?" He answered that he had attended a large revival where he had heard some powerful speakers and seen hundreds of men converted. "Did n't you see anything else?" I interrogated. "Oh, yes, I attended a shooting-gallery one evening." "But," said I, impatiently, "I suppose you went to the theatre?" To this he assented, and, as I read the *Herald* daily and knew that the opera season was at its height and that *Lucrezia Borgia* was being magnificently sung, I further queried, "And how about the opera—did n't you hear *Lucrezia Borgia*?" He thought a second, then said "Lucrezia Borgia! Lucrezia Borgia! No I did n't go—she was out of town the week I was there."

Having severed my connection with the seminary in the woods, I had to look around for some other means of support; and, while I had a few private pupils in the village, my earnings were not sufficient to support my family, so I again embraced my little tuning-hammer, and occasionally found some old-fashioned piano that needed my skilful assistance. The first tuning I did was for Mr. Tyson, where I formerly boarded. He had an old piano that must have enjoyed sweet solace and silence for many years, because when he sent for me to examine it and asked my opinion as to whether it was in need

of tuning, and I told him that it was sadly in need of it, he replied, " Why, that 's strange, Mr. Steinert; I had it tuned only twenty years ago." I must have had an eye to business when I became a piano-forte tuner, for one morning a negro slave came galloping into Thomasville astride a handsome thoroughbred horse, and stopping at Mr. Foster's dismounted and inquired of me, for I was on the piazza, if " the Professor " lived there, and if he was at home. Smiling at the title, but feeling rather set up to be thus addressed, I said, " You are standing before the Professor; what can I do for you ? "

" Marse Bailey," said he, " done gone and sont me yere to tell yo' to come right out to de plantation an' fix up de pianner fer him, 'cause de Missus' chillun comin'-from New York to-day, an' dey mus' have de pianner fixed."

" Where does Marse Bailey live ? " I asked.

" Oh, 'on de plantation over in Flurridy, 'bout thirty miles from here, an' Massa tol' me to say dat yo' should come right 'long with me. He sho' did."

My wife who had been silently listening to the conversation said to me in German that I should not think of going on such a wild-goose chase and to pay no attention to the fellow. As she had by this time trained me to entire submission I felt myself considerably in the minority, even had I dared to visit a plantation in Florida, and thus enjoy a horseback ride of thirty miles through an unknown country with a negro slave for my companion; so, in keeping with my position, I informed the slave that I would not go, whereupon the negro was dumfounded, and said: " I reckon yo' don' know

Marse Bailey, suh. Why, he say dat yo' mus' come, and, golly! yo' oughter know what dat means. I 'low yo' don' know Marse Bailey." I again submissively appealed to my wife, but she most emphatically said no, and the negro, protesting, rode off without me.

A few days after this episode the fellow returned and told me in the most imperative and impressive manner that his master was "powerful" angry when he came back without me, and that unless I came at once to the plantation and fixed the piano he would come for me himself, and that there was bound to be a fight if he did. In this somewhat trying position I looked into the soulful eyes of my wife who sat upon the steps of the piazza with our young son, silently pleading with her to be allowed to go. As she still objected, I told her that I was certain of bringing home a large sum for my services, and that it might lead up to considerable business among the wealthy planters in the vicinity. Mrs. Steinert was a practical woman, and she valued money more than I did; so she meditated upon the business side of the transaction, and after a while graciously consented, and I went with the slave to the stable for a good saddle-horse upon which to make the journey. The proprietor told me that he had just what I needed, and that he would have her saddled and at the door in fifteen minutes, so I went back, and, putting a few necessary articles in a strap, went to the gate and waited for the horse.

You can imagine my surprise when I saw a negro approaching astride a big, lank, brown mule, the expression of whose face and the drooping of whose

long ears was anything but reassuring; whereupon the following conversation took place, the slave upon his handsome thoroughbred grinning with suppressed laughter.

"But, Sam, I thought that your master would provide me with a horse, not a mule, for this long journey?"

"Why, Marse Steinert," he said, as he dismounted and walked around the creature, that stood with her fore feet firmly planted, "I reckon yo' don' know Hannah—why she 's de likeliest mule in Thomasville, dat she is, suh, an' she 'll get yo' over de groun' fas'er dan any horse in dis yere town, suh—Hannah 's a great mule, Professor, an' yo' don' have to frail 'er, suh."

"That may be, but Hannah looks as if she had a mind of her own. But I 'll try her anyway. Just strap this package on the saddle, Sam, and I 'll mount." I handed the negro my small parcel which he proceeded to strap to the saddle.

"You 'll fin' Hannah all right 'after yo' get 'quainted with her," he said reassuringly; "she ain't much fer style, sho' nuff, but if yo' want a right steady critter that can go right 'long an' nebber give out, Hannah is de mule for yo'."

Hannah had stood stock-still during this conversation, never saying a word, her ears laid back and her deeply sunken, elephant-like eyes calmly taking me in. After several attempts to mount I found myself on Hannah's back, and I felt nearer heaven than I have ever felt since, for she was the tallest mule I have ever seen. I seized the reins, while Sam whispered some magical words in her ear, and

presto! we were off like the wind, the crowd that had collected shouting "Good luck!" All I could do was to hold on as Hannah flew after the dark leader, but when we were about a mile from the town we came to a fork in the roads, whereupon Hannah laid her ears back and abruptly bolted, and I, having a loose rein, quickly shot over her head like a ball and landed in the middle of the road in a mud-puddle. The negro was some distance ahead, and I hallooed like a wild man before I succeeded in making him hear. Finally he stopped, turned around, came back, and helped me into the saddle again, Hannah standing with her feet firmly planted like a rock. For a half-hour we did our best to make her go on down the road, but not one step would she take, and, after standing on her hind feet and kicking with her fore, and then, to vary the monotony, standing on her fore feet and kicking with her hind, as the negro plied the whip and swore and I held on, she calmly lay down in the mud, and I managed to scramble out unhurt from under her. After lots of whipping, coaxing, and much swearing—on the part of the negro—we finally got her on her feet, and headed her for Thomasville, and as I would not mount her again I took the negro's horse and he climbed upon old Hannah and we started for town, the mule going like the wind, braying with glee to find that she was going back to the stable. The owner seemed much grieved and quite crestfallen over our remarks concerning his pet Hannah, and said: "You did n't understand her, Professor; if you had just whispered 'oats' in her ear she would have carried you to the end of the world." Whereupon I ventured to remark that



she had nearly carried me there as it was—which remark he did not seem to understand.

As we had lost over an hour, I cheerfully mounted the mild-eyed, stiff-legged animal which he now brought out, assuring me that he was the safest and best saddle-horse in the barn and had once been a race-horse. "He will give you no trouble," said he, "and, what 's better, will do the last mile quicker than the first." And I found that he was right, for it was with difficulty that I got "Ramrod" started, for the venerable animal had a spavin on his right hind foot which had just been blistered, and was blind in one eye and nearly so in the other, and as I crept along after my negro guide, I felt that I might better have taken my chances on Hannah. After a few miles, "Ramrod's" stiffness seemed to disappear, and I was just congratulating myself on my mount when we entered Monticello, where we were to have dinner and rest, and where I had decided to try to get a few pianos to tune. As we passed a church the bell began to ring, and its clanging evidently awoke in "Ramrod's" mind memories of the race-track, for he pricked up his ears, and with a snort took the bit and dashed down the street. I quite forgot the owner's caution "not to pull on the reins if he started," for I had landed on his neck when he plunged off and was holding on to the reins for dear life when we dashed past the hotel, and my hat flew off as I tore along down the principal street like John Gilpin. After a mile I saw that the street ended in a large establishment of some kind, and as I ceased to pull on the reins, "Ramrod" slackened his pace, and seeing no

further course ahead, he abruptly wheeled around and started up the street as docile and meek as a cow. I rode up to the hotel, where I dismounted before the laughing crowd, covered with mud, and disgusted with the four-footed beasts of Thomasville.

After dinner I went out in search of business, and as there was a young ladies' school in the village I called there and found several pianos that needed my attention, and when I returned to the hotel I had quite a snug little sum for my afternoon's work.

We had about ten miles more to ride before we would reach the plantation, and with much trepidation I again mounted old "Ramrod," and we set off,—and happy am I to state that we entered the plantation gates without more adventure. The estate was a magnificent one, consisting of thousands of acres of land and great numbers of slaves, and we were fully an hour riding up the beautiful avenue of live-oaks through the vast possessions. The mansion was a large colonial one, and I found the Colonel and his wife upon the steps to welcome me. On entering I was presented to the lovely Misses Bellamy, who had just returned from New York City where they had been attending school, and who were at the very moment overseeing the unpacking of a magnificent Steinway "Grand." "You are just in time," said Colonel Bailey, "to superintend the setting up of our new piano," and feeling that I had reached a congenial place I went to work with a will, and soon the beautiful instrument was in position in the drawing-room, and before I knew it I was improvising, the family gathered around me, and the pleasant reception I

had received was enhanced. My work at the plantation consisted in tuning the new piano and also putting into shape an old "Chickering." After spending three or four delightful days, playing and enjoying the hospitality of this cultured Southern family, I again mounted "Ramrod," who was quite sleek and active from his liberal supply of oats, and rode down the avenue with a generous remuneration in my pocket, and a cordial invitation to bring my wife and son and my beloved violoncello, and spend the Christmas holidays on the plantation, which invitation I gladly accepted, the noble Colonel sending his family carriage to Thomasville for us. We had an ideal visit, and I shall always remember these charming people, their beautiful home, and, above all, the kindness they showed us during our stay with them.

Encouraged by my financial success, and by a number of letters to several wealthy planters given me by Colonel Bailey, I concluded to call upon these people at their plantations, and my next visit was to an immense estate owned by General Wingfield, where, upon the strength of my letter from Colonel Bailey, I tuned a piano and repaired a melodeon, for which I received a liberal fee. The General sent me to the plantation of a friend living some distance from his estate and offered me his horse for the trip, which offer I accepted. I found it a long, hard ride through the woods, and I was in the saddle from early morning until late at night; but I found plenty of work and was consequently happy. Returning to General Wingfield's, and finally to Thomasville, encouraged by the money I had

earned, I looked towards Tallahassee, Florida, as a Mecca for a piano-tuner, and one day we packed up our worldly possessions and left for that city for an indefinite stay. The place was a good field, and I was successful beyond anything I had dreamed of, tuning, repairing, and buying old pianos, which latter I fixed up, revarnished, and sold again at an excellent profit. In Tallahassee I had the pleasure of meeting the family of Mr. Ames, who held a high social position and was prominently identified with the Episcopal Church. He was devoted to music, and at his house I met many delightful people, and gave several musicals, which were attended by the élite of the city. I was no longer looked upon as a poor piano-tuner, and my star was in the ascendant when Mr. Ames invited me to give an organ concert in the church, at which the Bishop of Florida was an honored guest. After the concert I was presented to Mrs. Vietch, a widow from Athens, Georgia, a fine singer, and on several occasions I played the 'cello obligato for her songs. Mrs. Vietch urged me to settle in Athens, where she promised me not only the position of organist in the Episcopal church but a large class of pupils, assuring me that as there was no music-teacher there of note, I could not fail of being successful.

After talking the matter over with my wife we decided to go to Athens, and left at once for our new home. Reaching Union Station we changed cars, having a short wait there before proceeding on our journey. In the waiting-room of the station I overheard two men conversing, and as they spoke German I made bold enough to introduce myself,

excusing my presumption on the plea that I could not resist the temptation to speak my native tongue. During our conversation I was told that they were bound for Athens, for the purpose of establishing Mr. Hintz as a piano and singing teacher there,—Mr. Hintz's companion being a Mr. Barth of Atlanta, who was a piano dealer and tuner in that city. Here was a pretty kettle of fish! Two teachers for Athens, Georgia, where I had been assured I would be quite alone in the race. After telling me of their plans they, quite naturally, inquired where I was going, and when I told them that I, too, was bound for Athens, where I was under contract to play the organ in the Episcopal Church, and that I expected to have a class in piano and 'cello playing, our new-formed friendship changed to a feeling of rivalry, and I believe that we were both possessed of the same spirit as we jolted along towards classic Athens. Reaching the city I immediately called on my patroness, Mrs. Vietch, and she appeared somewhat dejected when I explained the situation to her, but she received me in a most affable manner and tried to console me, promising me a good class and success.

To my sorrow I found that there was still another music-teacher in Athens, a Mr. Lennert, who had resided there for many years. He was a queer genius, and lived in a very small cottage in a grove a little distance from the city,. Mr. Lennert also came from Germany, and was a man about fifty-four years of age, of unprepossessing appearance and quite devoid of the qualities which go to make up a successful pianoforte teacher, being of an

extremely modest and quiet disposition. Mr. Lennert was not accustomed to mingle much in society, neither did he court the good-will of a capricious public; and I have since thought that he was quite sensible in living the life of a recluse. He was a bachelor, and it is to be presumed that he did not belong to the army of adventurers sometimes recruited from the ranks of musicians; in fact, he did not at all resemble a musician, but he might have been taken for a schoolmaster in the old country, who, without any aim, had drifted to the little grove in Athens, Georgia.

Quite naturally, a man of such absolute independence did not court the sympathy of the community, neither did he attempt to gain their good-will, and yet he was a person of some influence, and he had many friends who admired him, and who were always willing to champion him. What I knew of him made me judge him as a man of modest bearing, utterly without conceit, and these noble qualities which were so much a part of this simple man had sufficient force to make him well liked among those who knew him intimately. Having dwelt upon his qualities as a man, the question arises, What of his qualities as a musician? These I could never discover, as he certainly was not a player, and to judge him by his pupils he could not have possessed much musical taste, but he must have imbibed and drunk deep draughts from the fountain of a good musician, as he taught Clementi and Hummel principally, and indulged occasionally in a few of the early sonatas of Mozart. When I heard some of his pupils play a Clementi sonatina, it did my

heart good to discover in their rendering of it certain evidences of a lost school of teaching, which appeared rejuvenated in the quaint little house in the grove, so that in justice to music, I must say that I was a silent admirer of Herr Lennert and his art.

As for Mr. Hintz, my other competitor, he was diametrically opposed to Mr. Lennert. He was a tall, handsome blond, with heavy, carefully dressed mustache, long wavy hair, a fine complexion, and he wore gold-mounted eye-glasses, which gave him a scholarly air. He walked with a slight limp, was very dignified in his bearing, having, if I remember rightly, served as an officer in the German army. He was not a good pianist, but he possessed an exceedingly fine tenor voice, and he rendered his German songs with much warmth and expression; in fact, he sang as he looked. He was not possessed of the lamblike nature of old Lennert, neither did he need the assistance of his friends to fight his battles; in fact, he was very aggressive, and became one of my bitterest enemies. While I was the *protégé* of Mrs. Vietch, who represented the leading lights of the Episcopal Church, Mr. Hintz's patroness was a lady of higher standing socially, and of greater influence, as she was a prominent member of the Presbyterian Church, which was considered the ultra-fashionable church of Athens,—the Episcopal denomination being comparatively new and having only one or two wealthy members. In view of the influence of the Church upon social conditions, I soon discovered that I had the worst part of the bargain. The quarrels between the friends of my champion, Mrs. Vietch, and Mr. Hintz's champion, Mrs.

Stevens, and, above all, the loyalty of the adherents of the Lennert faction, became a subject of much importance among the good people of Athens, and the climax was reached when Mr. Thomas Cobb established a large seminary for young women, liberally endowing it in memory of his only daughter, Lucy, who had died when a young girl.

Mr. Cobb was the most prominent lawyer in Georgia, a brother of Howell Cobb, who was Secretary of the Treasury under President Buchanan. The establishment of this institution required the appointment of a director for the music department, and, as it may be presumed, the three music-teachers became very apprehensive, fearing that all of the pupils would seek instruction at the Cobb Institute, so Hintz and I immediately applied for the position. Mr. Cobb, influenced by the musical war, told us that he would not take any of the local teachers, and that he had already engaged a man for the position by the name of Dr. Wurm, who at that time was musical director in a school at La Grange, Georgia. Dr. Wurm assumed his duties immediately, and I asked him to give me the position of assistant; this he declined to do, and appointed a gentleman by the name of Kalliwoda, a nephew of the great composer Kalliwoda, Kapellmeister of the Prince of Fürstenberg of Donaueschingen.

Dr. Wurm was credited with being a master of all instruments, and if the reports I heard of him were true, I think that he would have surpassed my beloved old Stadt Musikus, Dazian, in his musical knowledge. I was not privileged to make a comparison, as the good Doctor displayed as much



modesty in showing what he could do as did Len-  
nert in his little home in the grove. I must, how-  
ever, add the very interesting fact that Hintz,  
Dr. Wurm, and myself claimed to be great violon-  
cello players, and I very much regret that a careful  
examination of our claims was never made. Dr.  
Wurm played the organ in the Presbyterian Church,  
and while he received the full patronage and in-  
dorsement of his manifold talents, it leaked out that  
he was not a very good organist, and it was even  
said that the organist of the Episcopal Church  
played better, and with more taste and judgment.  
These remarks soon resulted in two musical factions  
being formed, the Wurm and the Steinert, and it  
was n't a passing event, and became quite turbu-  
lent when I was offered the position of organist by  
the most prominent members of the Presbyterian  
Church, led by Mrs. Robb, a daughter of the Presi-  
dent of Franklin College,—a lady of great beauty,  
refinement, and undisputed influence in every city  
where she resided, for she spent part of the year in  
New Orleans and Washington and New York. Mrs.  
Robb was a pupil of mine and a strong admirer of  
my musical abilities. The position being formally  
offered me, with an increase of salary, and over the  
head of the Principal of the Lucy Cobb Seminary,  
was a flattering one, and I naturally felt inclined to  
accept it in view of the conditions under which I  
lived, and I did so. It turned out that this offer  
was made during the absence of Mr. Cobb and with-  
out his consent, and when he returned to the city  
and was told of the change of organist in the church  
he was very indignant, and said that he would never

give his consent to my playing in the church, and that he would withdraw his support if I persisted in accepting the position. My friends were equally stubborn, saying that they would leave if Dr. Wurm remained at the organ; so it was decided that neither of us should play, and for many months there was no organist in the Presbyterian Church.

Having resigned my position in the Episcopal Church,—for which I brought upon myself the animosity of some of its members, which I have always regretted,—I must confess that it was a good thing, for a prestige was created in my favor as a musician, and as Mr. Hintz was not sufficiently fortified to enter the arena in the great musical contest between Dr. Wurm and myself, he gathered together his traps, folded his tent, and one day, like the Arab, silently stole away; while poor honest Lennert must have been lost to the world, for I cannot now remember what became of him. From that day my reputation as a teacher of music was well established, and I had a large number of pupils, made up of the most prominent young ladies of Athens and the neighboring towns, and I became prosperous.

During this period a little daughter had been born to me, Heloise, and I felt blissfully happy and content. I rented a large house and furnished it attractively, bought six acres of land adjoining the Lucy Cobb Institute, a horse and carriage, and invested quite a sum in the pianoforte business, having for my partner Mr. William Talmedge, a local jeweller. For the first time since my arrival in America my musical success was in the ascendant, and I felt

that it was time to demonstrate to the parents of my pupils and their friends to what state of musical culture they had advanced under my guidance. I therefore arranged for a complimentary recital where they could all play or sing, and as this was quite an event in the city, and created much interest among the aristocracy, an invitation was sent to Mr. Alexander Hamilton Stephens, later on Vice-President of the Confederacy, to attend the concert, which invitation he accepted. The hall was filled, and the affair was not only a social but an artistic success, and at the close Mr. Stephens, in a happy speech, presented me with a handsome silver service, the gift of my pupils, and I felt that, even though I had not been allowed to play the organ in the Presbyterian Church, I was held in some importance by the people of Athens.

I must in some way have received some creditable mention among the colored race, for one day a handsome young mulatto, the body-servant of Mr. Hull, came to me and begged me to give him lessons upon the violoncello,—“ violinsolo ” he called it,—saying that his master had given him permission to secure such instruction. While I did not look upon him as a pupil, I felt inclined to help the poor fellow, who was considered a musical genius, and who led a brass band of colored men and wanted to form a string band from among the musicians. I therefore brought out my violoncello and tried to teach him the names of the four strings, A, D, G, C, but found that he could not possibly comprehend what I was talking about, and after several attempts I was just about to give up in despair when it

occurred to me that his master had four horses of different colors, and that I might possibly use them to advantage in illustrating my meaning. So I said, "Wilson, your master has a chestnut horse which we shall call the first string, A; his roan saddle-horse shall be the second string, D; the gray pony the third string, G; while the white carriage horse shall be the fourth string, C." As he knew the color of the horses he soon learned the strings, and while I regret to say that Wilson did not become a great artist upon the violoncello, and was often "off his base," he learned to play very well, and was soon quite prominent among his color as a virtuoso of ability.

On March 14, 1861, my wife gave birth to another son, Alexander, and on April 12, 1861, the first gun of the Civil War was fired upon Fort Sumter, thus beginning the war between the North and the South. For some months previous, ever since the secession of South Carolina in December, my business had begun to fall off, but it had been impossible for me to leave, owing to the condition of my wife. Now everything was excitement, and I was daily asked by my pupils if I was ready to go to war and help them fight the Yankees. I did not dare to answer negatively, as any one at that time who declined to fight the Yankees was looked upon as a traitor and was in danger of lynching. As I had very little sympathy for the Southern people when they wanted to fight the great and glorious flag which I love so much, I had sufficient cause to feel uneasy, and finally decided to leave the South, which was in a state of rebellion and with scarcely any government. I told my good wife to hurry up and get well, which

she did, and we quietly prepared to leave Athens. I found that it was not an easy task on our part, because, with our three children, we were comfortably housed, had a nice horse and carriage, a number of pianos and other instruments, besides an interest in the piano business with Mr. Talmedge.

The hateful spirit of the Southern people towards the Northerners had reached a very high state, and the Northerners and foreigners who were at that time living in the South were either looked upon as friends if they stayed, or enemies if they left. These were the reasons which prevented me from disposing of my property, or even attempting to collect the money due me, as it would have appeared to the hot-headed Southerners that I intended to leave for good, and I would have had to suffer many indignities at their hands. Although I had worked very hard all my life to accumulate a little something, I could not see the advantage to be gained by staying in the South and saving my property at the cost of surrendering myself to fight for a cause which I could not believe in. I managed to collect about three hundred dollars, and by telling the people that after taking my family North I should return and look after my property, and as I did not dispose of anything, and my dealings while there had established a feeling of confidence in me, we were permitted to leave Athens unmolested.

We had scarcely crossed into North Carolina when the terrors of war began to manifest themselves, and when we entered Richmond, Virginia, the excitement of the Southern people knew no bounds, and we were in the most trying and

dangerous position. Soldiers were everywhere, and they would rush into the cars with drawn bayonets looking for deserters, so that my wife and children were in a constant state of nervous excitement bordering on terror. We found all communication cut off when we reached Delaware, and travelled to Washington, D. C., by stage and wagon. I shall never forget the hardships we passed through in trying to reach New York City, and I was in the most dejected and disturbed state of mind when we finally landed in the metropolis, having but little money left, for our journey had taken nearly all I had collected in Athens.





## CHAPTER VIII

Wretched Days in New York City—New Haven—Formation of Steinert's Orchestra

I WAS forced to look to my wife's relatives for help, and for this reason we went to the house of her father, who was very poor and who lived in a few rooms in a tenement-house on Sixth Street. He received us kindly and offered to share with us his rooms and humble fare, but I felt my position keenly; and our sufferings in the hot, stuffy New York tenement-house, after our attractive Southern home, were frightful. We tried to make the best of it, and every day I hoped that I might find something in the way of work to keep the wolf from the door, but it was impossible, because the city was in a state of great excitement, and general business was upset, the theatres nightly playing to empty benches. There was absolutely no chance for me, and when the cry of war extended all over the country, in obedience to that memorable and grand proclamation of the noble Lincoln, calling for seventy-five thousand men, New York became a big camp where people of all classes rushed to the recruiting office to be enrolled in the Grand Army of the Union.

Looking over the situation and the misery I was forced to endure, I visited the playhouses over and over again, trying to get some position in the orchestra. I also called upon orchestral leaders and conductors for some employment, but there was no opening for me in New York; and my hopes perished when I saw a notice in a German paper stating that five of the greatest musicians of America were playing in a beer saloon as a means of subsistence, among them Carl Anchütz as pianist, Carl Bergmann as 'cellist, and three others equally prominent in the musical world, whose names I do not now recall. I could not believe my eyes, and I immediately walked over to Steuben Hall, a beer saloon on the Bowery, and there I found these men, and heard them play for a lot of Germans drinking beer and smoking their long pipes. From that day I did not look for an engagement in New York, knowing how fruitless it was.

My children, on account of the intense heat, became ill with cholera infantum, and as I was in a desperate state of mind I resolved to leave the city even at the risk of my life. Mrs. Steinert had a sister residing in New Haven, and in our distress my wife wrote to her, telling her of our troubles. Mrs. Bretzfelder was a woman of refinement and goodness of heart, and, influenced by her sympathy for us in our great need, she wrote my wife at once, inviting us to come to her in New Haven and to stay with her during the summer, or until I could find something to do. Under ordinary circumstances I might have hesitated to accept an invitation for a family of five and for an indefinite time, but the



dire need of a temporary home for my wife and sick babies was uppermost in my mind, and with feelings of deep gratitude I wrote her that we would come, and we left for New Haven at once. The change of air was indeed a godsend to my little ones, and they picked up immediately, as did my good wife, who had been far from well since the birth of Alexander.

Comfortably housed on Congress Avenue, it was my first duty to earn a little money, as I had nothing left, so I tried to obtain a few pupils in the city, but was unsuccessful. Then, acting upon the advice of a friend, I went out to Centreville, a village close by, hoping to find something in the boys' school there, but I was told that on account of the advanced season there was nothing for me. I went to Naugatuck, Bethany, and all the near-by towns, but with like result, and for a time I was absolutely unable to find anything to do. Finally I was given the position of substitute organist in Dr. Cleveland's church on Church Street—now the Public Library—for which I received one hundred dollars a year. I also succeeded in obtaining some German workmen in Mr. Treat's melodeon factory as pupils on the melodeon, violin, and flute, thus having an assured income of about six dollars a week, which was a great boon to me.

Feeling that we were an incumbrance upon Mrs. Bretzfelder, and having a fair chance to work, I rented a few rooms in York Square and began house-keeping; and after paying my rent I had about three dollars left for provisions. The precarious condition of my pocketbook must have been noticed by the proprietor of a grocery and meat

store on the corner of York Square and Broadway, Mr. Cornelius Pierpont, with whom I daily traded, paying cash for the few things I was able to buy, for one day he presented me with a large, juicy beefsteak, prefacing the gift with a little speech which expressed to me a nature full of noble generosity and kindly impulses, and which appeared to me an act never to be forgotten. I thankfully accepted the gift, and I have never regretted it—the only like gift I have ever received. Mr. Pierpont little knew how much that delicious bit of meat meant to my family, and I have never eaten a steak that tasted so good in all my life.

One day, which I shall always look upon as a red-letter day, the position as organist at St. Thomas's Episcopal Church was offered to me, and with it the munificent salary of \$150 a year. Having now quite a number of pupils I looked for a larger and more commodious rent, and finding a double brick house on Crown Street, near Church, I took half of it and moved in. Through the influence of Dr. Beardsley, the rector of St. Thomas's, I was appointed music-teacher in the Episcopal Academy at Cheshire, under the Reverend Dr. Horton, while Mrs. Steinert secured the position of French instructor in the same institution. We went to Cheshire twice weekly: on the days that Mrs. Steinert taught, I kept house and looked after the children, while she resumed management of the household on the days set apart for my work. In addition to this, I had a class at the Russell Military School on Wooster Place, and was therefore in prosperous circumstances, and felt correspondingly happy.

Feeling a longing to take up my musical work again, I looked about and finally succeeded in forming a quartet, which was made up of the following named gentlemen: Mr. W. Dexter Anderson, now a prominent physician residing on Temple Street, but who was then a student at Yale, as pianist; Mr. Carl Wehner, violin; Charles Chapman, viola; and myself, violoncello. We met several times each week and played quartets and trios from the old masters, and finally gave a public recital in Bull's piano-forte warerooms in the Cutler Building on Chapel Street. We had a good audience, and I think that they appreciated and enjoyed our music. Mr. Anderson, our pianist, possessed great musical ability as to technique and expression, and was extremely well qualified for that school of music which requires not only a musical nature but a love for the divine art; and in having a pianist of such rare qualities, and one who was withal so modest in his art, our quartet could not help but be successful. Mr. Wehner was a fair violinist, and while his limited technique and control over his instrument might have been due to his profession as a piano teacher, which did not permit of his practising much upon the violin, he was a musician of refined taste, an excellent reader, and full of devotion to the class of music we played. Mr. Chapman was an amateur on the viola, but a good pianist, and, while he found it rather difficult to conquer the technicalities of his instrument he worked hard, and as he was a musical enthusiast, and actually lived for music, the little he could do upon the viola carried with it these noble qualities, and he did as well as he could. As for

the violoncello player, he was in close affinity with the viola.

My next step in a musical way was the organizing of an orchestra, which was not an easy task, as the woods were not then full of musicians who could play upon orchestral instruments. I began recruiting, however, and found a number of poor violinists, both firsts and seconds, with Chapman on the viola. The rest of the instruments were in keeping with the fiddlers, and such delicacies as French horns, oboes, and bassoons had to be imagined, for they did not materialize. I called this band together one day, and while I played the violoncello I also conducted, using my bow as a baton. Our rehearsals were simply frightful, and what we could not attain in harmonic beauty we made up for in discord and such noises as to frighten the horses which were kept in a livery stable next door, and which immediately signified their displeasure by violently kicking against their stalls in rhythm with the scrapings of the fiddles, the windy tones of the flutes, the squeaky harmonies emitted from the yellow clarionets that cried out in despair for further assistance from their brazen brothers, the trumpets and trombones,—giving to the “City of Elms” and the seat of the great University of Yale a pandemonium of tones that has never been equalled in any cultured city of the globe. My band was really in earnest when in active service, and the volume of tone which the men succeeded in bringing out of their instruments reminded me of the heavy artillery and lamentations of the wounded at that time congregated upon the battlefield of Bull Run,

which was quite as disastrous to our army as my little Yankee and Dutch band was to the peaceful neighborhood of Crown Street.

But my musicians were so devoted to the new orchestra that they imagined that the citizens of New Haven would be anxious to exchange their quarters for their tone production, and unanimously voted to give a concert in Music Hall. I, as their leader and promoter, and the most intense sufferer at that period, was in the minority when I told them that while they were a good band of brothers, full of friendship and love, they were a d—d bad lot of musicians; and I looked upon them, when professionally engaged, as children of Hades; and as I had always thought of New Haven as a city of brotherly love and full of religious sentiment, I cautioned them not to thus expose themselves to the ridicule of these good people. If, however, they insisted upon inflicting themselves upon an unsuspecting public, to go to Meriden and give a concert there,—which they did. I must confess that the people of that city and myself differed greatly as to the efficiency of the orchestra, because they turned out *en masse* for the concert, and after the performance they expressed their enjoyment of the evening's program, giving such encouragement to the band as to cause them to go on with their work. The financial success was also considerable, because we had three dollars apiece after paying expenses—a dividend which was in keeping with the character of our efforts—and so delighted were we that we went out serenading after the concert, calling upon the notables of the city; and I am happy to state that, although we made

the night hideous with our noise, none of us were arrested.

One day while in Cheshire I was called upon to tune the piano of Deacon R. It was a terribly hot day, and I must say that my temperament was in keeping with the temperament of the deacon's piano, which was frightfully out of tune. I almost forgot that I was in lovely Cheshire, felt transported to Scheinfeld, and I suddenly remembered the seven beer-stuben, and longed for a glass of the elixir of Gambrinus. In my desire for the beer I looked at the old Deacon while I made a good stretch on the treble string of his piano, and my German nature asserted itself, and I calmly asked him whether he had any beer in the house or not; whereupon he put his hand behind his ear, as a reflecting resonator for his musical tympanum, and in a high, squeaky voice, said, "Beer! Beer! You mean root beer, eh?" "No," I shouted, "I mean lager beer, plain lager beer, fresh and cool; have you got any?" This expression was evidently a new one to him, for he continued, "No, we have n't any root beer in the house, but I can give you a glass of cool water with ginger in it,"—which drink I accepted.

I mention this incident simply in connection with a business deal which I had with the good Deacon later on, for it was only a few weeks after that he offered to sell me his piano, saying that his wife was ill unto death, and that as he had no children at home, there would be no one left to play upon it. As he offered it to me for \$140, I decided to take it, and paid him the money; agreeing to leave the piano there until after the death of his wife, when he was

to notify me and I was to send for it. The good woman soon passed away, and the Deacon wrote me of the sad fact, telling me that I could move the piano any time, so I sent a team for it, and it was soon set up in my Crown Street house. A week later the Deacon drove up in his antiquated chaise, drawn by a lame, lanky mare, for the purpose, as I supposed, of paying me a call. I invited the worthy gentleman in, whereupon he told me in a very polite and dignified manner that he had called to collect a small amount due him. I was dumbfounded, for I did not know that I owed him anything, and horrified when he said that he had notified me by letter of his wife's death, telling me that I could call for the piano,—that the outlay amounted to three cents, and that he would like it. I put my hand in my pocket, drew out a handful of pennies, and counting out three gave them to him, and he departed quite satisfied. I then appreciated his liberality in giving me a glass of water with half a spoonful of ginger in it.

My experiences with my numerous landlords would fill a book in themselves, for forty years ago rents were scarce and high in New Haven, and the landlords that had houses to rent lorded it over their tenants. I was at one time the tenant of a man who was really accommodating, for on the first day of the month he called on me as early as 8 A.M. to collect his rent, thus relieving my mind from all anxiety for the rest of the day. Occasionally the first of the month fell on Sunday, and as he was a minister, and therefore could not desecrate the holy Sabbath by any dealing whatsoever, he used to



JOSEPH HAYDN'S CONCERT GRAND.





spend Saturday afternoon walking up and down past my house until I noticed him, and, if I had the money, went out and paid him. He would never accept anything but a check, because it served as a receipt, and he thereby saved the two-cent revenue stamp required at that time not only upon checks but upon receipts as well. Another man, to whom I one day applied for a house, told me that he had one but that he must have some references as to my ability to pay my rent. I gave him the names of several prominent men in the city who knew me, and after calling upon them he sent for me and told me that he had made inquiries concerning me and found that I was all right. Whereupon I said, "I, too, have made inquiries about you." With great eagerness and much curiosity he inquired what had been said of him, and although I hesitated, he finally forced me to tell him, that while I had heard that he was all right I had also been told that he was the meanest landlord in the city. Without another word he said, "Mr. Steinert, you may have the house."

My little Dutch-Yankee band were as much interested as ever in their playing, and I was equally anxious to have an orchestra—even if a bad one—in the city. I worked hard, and finally, by weeding out a lot of bad players and substituting others, had a good orchestra, and we decided to appear before the public under the name of the "Steinert Orchestra," and I felt very happy when I heard them play Haydn's Symphonies, several overtures, operatic selections, and Strauss waltzes. As I knew that the orchestra could not live without

some financial basis, I made an engagement for them with the officers of the "Young Men's Institute," who gave a series of lectures each winter in Music Hall, with such celebrated speakers as Wendell Phillips, Henry Ward Beecher, Anna Dickinson, John B. Gough, and many other well-known orators. Mr. Edwin Marble, the President of the Association, engaged us to play a concert program of one hour before the lectures, and I must say to the credit of the orchestra that our music gave general satisfaction, and may perhaps be called the corner-stone of the New Haven Symphony Orchestra, which now affords so much pleasure to our cultured citizens in a series of concerts given each winter in the Hyperion Theatre.

Among the musicians there was a peculiar character, a violinist by the name of Fischer. He was a bachelor, a countryman of mine, coming from Bavaria, where he was originally a blacksmith. Without going into details concerning his peculiar characteristics, I shall only say that Peter Fischer celebrated his birthday twice a year, and had a good time semi-annually, for he was not a temperance man, loving his beer as much as his music, and no one can deny that he loved the latter with his whole heart and soul. While Peter always enjoyed his beer, the banner days of the year were his birthdays, when he would invite his friends—and he had a great number of them—and they would assemble in a beer-stube in a basement on Church Street, kept by Moebus. Fischer expected his friends to come early and stay late. He would usually gather his forces together in the morning and open the banquet

by ordering beer to be served in different-sized glasses. With these glasses before him on the table and his friends close at hand, he would form a miniature company of soldiers, the officers being represented by the larger glasses, and after giving a few orders the guests would each seize a glass, drink the beer, put the vessel back on the table in its original position, whereupon Fischer, after several more commands, would sweep the glasses to the floor as a *finale* of the military manceuvre. It was an unfortunate day for the conductor of the "Steinert Orchestra" when one of Fischer's birthdays occurred on the day when the orchestra was engaged to play a concert program before Gough's lecture, and it was still worse for the great conductor that he did n't know of it.

A little before seven I entered Music Hall loaded with music and my violoncello, and, as it was about time for the men to make their appearance and not one of the band came in, I grew cold with anxiety, and almost embraced Mr. Briggs, the second-horn player, when he entered. "Where are the others?" I questioned, whereupon he burst out laughing and said, "Why, don't you know that to-day is Fischer's *Geburtstag*, and that the orchestra is down in Moebus's cellar celebrating?" It did n't take me long to run over to Moebus's, where I found my orchestra in a state of great hilarity and mirth, for Fischer had been drilling his soldiers all day. Immediately I put my head in the door Fischer rushed at me and in a maudlin way embraced me, expressing his great love for me, offering me wine or beer in honor of the happy day. While I would have enjoyed Fischer's

hospitality upon any other occasion, I was in despair when I looked around and saw the condition of my little band and, knowing their musical state when sober, I naturally felt that the engagement to play for the lecture that evening would be connected with great risk. I issued a call upon them nevertheless to follow me to the hall, whereupon they began to laugh, and informed me *en masse* that they would not play, that it was Fischer's *Geburtstag*, that they were invited there by him to celebrate the happy event, and that they would never desert him.

For a moment I was staggered. It was nearly time for the concert, and here were my men in a semi-intoxicated condition, refusing to play. Suddenly a happy thought came to me, and in the most chummy manner I said, "All right, boys, let 's have a round of beer in honor of the event." The beer was immediately served, and lifting my glass I drank to the health of Peter Fischer, our colleague. While waiting for another round I said that the glorious day could not be brought to a nobler close than by an hour of music, and again drinking to Fischer and the orchestra, I emptied my stein, and while waiting for another I led up to the concert which we were pledged to play at Music Hall, to the disgrace if we failed to appear and do our duty, and by the time the third stein had been emptied the entire band voted to follow me to the hall, and with Fischer at the head we started.

It was fortunate that the beer-stube was so near, otherwise we might never have reached the hall, owing to the uncertain condition of some of the artists. They managed to take their places upon

the stage, however, and began at once to manipulate their instruments. The program arranged for the evening opened with a Haydn symphony, followed by Auber's overture to *Crown Diamonds*, but when the men attacked the symphony, and I, sitting in the middle, conducting and playing, was called upon once or twice to save the swaying double-bass from falling, while the violins gave forth the most doubtful tones, the flutes and clarionets emitted the most blood-curdling cries, the horns croaked painfully, and the trombones brayed incoherently, I found that Haydn was not "in it" on Fischer's birthday, and we abruptly came to a general pause. Wishing to fill in the time to our credit, I called for a German march which they knew by heart, and which I hoped might serve my temperance audience for Haydn's symphony. Being now initiated in the musical state of my orchestra, I kept them playing simple pieces which they knew, for on that memorable evening they could not trust to their eyes. I was just congratulating myself upon the success of the affair, and we were on the last waltz, when the double-bass utterly collapsed and fell to the floor, his big instrument on top of him. A storm of applause came from the audience; in fact, the performance of my artists that evening would have made the most solemn dyspeptic laugh. The fall of the bass was the *finale*, and we scrambled off the stage, to be followed by Gough, who delivered a powerful lecture on temperance. I regret to say that we were not re-engaged.

I now felt that my position as organist at St. Thomas's was not paying me enough, so I asked for

an increase of salary, and as it was not forthcoming I decided to make a change, and applied for the organ at St. Patrick's. My early training at the monastery at Scheinfeld had well fitted me for the work required, and I was appointed to the position with a salary of three hundred dollars a year. I soon gave Mozart's *Twelfth Mass* with orchestra, this being the first time in the history of the State that a mass with orchestra was sung in church. If I am to judge by the crowd that entered the church on that memorable Sunday morning, and the immense gathering that stood outside the building, it must have been an event of some importance.

The excitement and work that rested upon me at that time brought on a run of typhoid fever, and I was ill for over four weeks and nearly lost my life. My good wife, noticing the immense amount of work which I did, and the small returns, suggested that I change my profession, and I began to look about for something else to do, finally deciding to go into the manufacturing of hoop-skirts, having acquired a certain knowledge of the business here and in Birmingham. Just as I was ready to open my establishment, I was told that the business had seen its best days, and that I had better try something else. As I had already rented a store, which was built for me on Grand Avenue, and as I was determined to give up teaching, I took the advice of Mrs. Steinert to open a music store,—Mrs. Steinert basing her advice on the fact that I had two second-hand pianos and a lot of fiddles, and that as I could tune and repair pianos, she felt sure that I could sell them. I never stopped to consider;

what my good wife advised was law to me and, without more ado, I moved my two second-hand pianos, fiddles, tuning-hammer, and whatever I had in musical wares into the store on Grand Avenue, and hung out my shingle.

About this time I began to receive letters from my friends in Athens asking me to come back and resume my profession; but in addition there also came letters from my former pupils whose parents were looked upon as rich before the war, and who now, on account of the emancipation of their slaves and the destruction of their property, were in a precarious condition. These pupils wrote me, asking me to advise them regarding the teaching of music, feeling that in their distress they must make use of the instruction which they had received from me. They also told me that my property had been confiscated, and that unless I came South at once and claimed it, I could expect nothing. Under such conditions I decided to let it go, although I greatly mourned the loss of my violoncello which, in my hasty flight, I had left in the house of a Northern family by the name of Meeker. I felt that Mrs. Meeker would guard it carefully; but I knew what war meant, and as the months passed and I heard nothing from her, I concluded that my Gemünder 'cello had gone with the rest of my property.

One morning I received a letter from Mrs. Meeker telling me that she was now living in New York City, and that if I would call upon her during the week she would be delighted to restore my violoncello, as Mrs. Meyer, who had kept it since she left Athens, was coming to New York on business, and



would bring it with her. I hastened to New York on the appointed day, and found Mrs. Meyer at the Meekers', and my beloved 'cello was given to me. After many questions, Mrs. Meeker told me that after the people knew that there was no prospect of my coming back, and in their anger had seized my household effects, they remembered that I had an expensive violoncello, and began to look for it, finally coming to her and demanding it. She denied all knowledge of it, though it was hidden away in a secret closet in the garret. After questioning her persistently, they evidently believed that she was telling the truth, for they went away leaving her in possession of the instrument. During the second year of the war her family was destitute and in a starving condition, and she made up her mind that she must either sell my 'cello or the pet cow which she had raised by hand from a calf, and of which she was very fond. After thinking the matter over for some time, she went up-stairs and took the 'cello from its hiding-place, resolved to sacrifice it instead of the cow, but as she passed her hands over the strings they began to vibrate, and to her excited mind seemingly spoke, begging to be spared. Without a moment's hesitation she put it back in the closet, sent for the butcher, and sold her cow. In telling the story she said that the reproachful tones of the 'cello so moved her that she would have starved rather than part with it. With my eyes swimming with tears I received again my beloved companion, for its loss had filled me with deep sorrow. My esteemed friend, Mr. John D. Jackson, of New Haven, Connecticut, an amateur 'cellist of ability, now possesses the instrument.



VIOLONCELLO.

Made by George Gemünder.





## CHAPTER IX

### Business

IT was in the year 1865 that I opened the store on Grand Avenue. Besides my two second-hand pianos and small musical instruments I carried a stock of sheet music; and as it was nearing the holiday season I added a small stock of Christmas goods. My wife proved to be an excellent saleswoman, her genial disposition being appreciated by the customers that frequented our shop. She also had a keen business sense which stood us in good stead, and our humble little music store soon became quite a popular and attractive centre, though its location was not what I could wish, nor was the establishment quite what I had pictured in my dreams. As my brother-in-law, Mr. Bretzfelder, had advanced me the few hundred dollars he could spare, and as I had only a limited credit with music dealers in New York, I did not like at that time to attempt anything larger or more pretentious. We were very fortunate, and I soon disposed of my two second-hand pianos, while, through the influence of my temperance band, I sold a number of fiddles, flutes, and fiddle-strings, building up quite a following

among the musicians of New Haven ; and in consequence I made money, paying off my indebtedness to my brother-in-law, and clearing about three thousand dollars in the first four or five months. Of course I felt very uneasy, for prosperity at that time tended to make me uncomfortable, so I decided to manufacture pianos. As this venture required more capital than I could possibly invest, I persuaded some of my German friends to go in business with me, and we started a company with a capital of twenty-five thousand dollars, calling it " The Mathushek Pianoforte Company." Mr. Mathushek, an eminent piano-builder, residing in New York, permitted us to use his name and accepted the superintendency of the concern, and we began to manufacture pianos in quite an extensive way on Orange Street between Chapel and Crown Streets, on the site now occupied by The Armstrong Furniture Company.

While this may appear as a wild and foolhardy venture, I must state that about thirty-five years ago the manufacture of pianos rested in the hands of a few men, and on account of the little competition and the increasing demand for their instruments, it was difficult for a small dealer like myself to obtain the agency for the sale of the pianos made by the manufacturers who had a wide reputation, — partly because of the superiority of their goods, and partly because of the popularity gained by their extensive advertising. These piano-makers had sufficient output for their instruments in the large cities, and they could therefore snub the dealers in the small cities ; and it was considered somewhat of a monopoly to

be allowed by these piano parents to buy their goods at any price. The small dealers, therefore, humbly submitted and served these feudal lords of the trade according to the autocratic methods which they dictated. The terms of these parents were in keeping with the popularity which their instruments enjoyed, and as the public then, and even now, know but little concerning the merits of musical instruments, they were guided and influenced mainly by the reports which came to their ears from time to time of the superiority of one maker over another.

The course pursued by these parents was a most original and expensive one, for they would engage celebrated artists to play upon their pianos in public, having the name of the maker of the piano in large letters in front of the instrument, while the program was filled up with testimonials from celebrated musicians, praising the piano and detailing its excellence over all others. To enhance still further this popularity, large concert halls were built where the piano made by the builder was exclusively used.

In manufacturing the "Mathushek Piano," under conditions so different from those employed by the great parents, viz., having had no experience in manufacturing or in advertising, and not possessing or being imbued with the artificial and conniving ways of the mighty ones, I was at a disadvantage in placing our pianos and giving to our production the prestige and heavenly halo that was so much a part of a piano sale at that time. Thus certain difficulties regarding our Superintendent, and the fear of my German partners lest they lose their money, made "The Mathushek Pianoforte Company,"

as created by us, short-lived; and as we were all weary of the venture, we virtually presented our successor with the stock, providing that he would assume our responsibilities. This was, indeed, a losing game on my part, and, as I was poorer than ever in pocket but richer in experience, I decided to hang on to the coat-tail of one of the parents, and I found it a greater undertaking than starting the "Mathushek Pianoforte Company," and losing my money besides.

After a long council with my wife, in which we went over the situation carefully, she suggested that I try to obtain the agency of one of the well-known piano houses, and as her advice always seemed infallible, I started, one fine fall day, for the great metropolis. I was conscious of the many obstacles before me in gaining an audience, and was not, therefore, surprised when I entered the establishment of a well-known maker to be looked upon with indifference by the first chap I met. A little embarrassed, I hastened to tell him who I was, where I came from, and what I wanted; whereupon he looked me over from head to foot, and evidently not seeing much in me in the way of profit nonchalantly directed me to the next man, to whom I meekly repeated my little speech, and he, having to deal with persons of importance, simply said "Umph," and sent me along down the line to the next fellow. By this time I knew my story very well, and I rattled it off with the speed of an accomplished linguist to the man who was occupied in counting immense rolls of bills, and as he was standing next to the safe, I decided that he was the guardian of the treasury. He

was a stern-looking man, clean-shaven, with a square, firm jaw. His complexion was florid, but his disposition was not, for he was as cold as a cucumber, and he looked to me, as he stood there, like a figure hewn out of marble. My speech must have had the effect of paralyzing his vocal chords and, in consequence, he was unable to utter a word, so he turned his head and pointed to the man behind him. By this time I decided that the fault lay in my speech, and as I approached the man who was seated at a desk, I had a new one ready. When I stood before him and looked him over, I decided that the new speech was altogether too good to be wasted upon him, for he looked like a workman; and quite out of place in the House of the Barons. He was a different chap from the rest, because when I addressed him he ungraciously turned away his head and, as I finished talking, he whirled around in his chair and expressed himself most indignantly, demanding of me to explain what had prompted such unwarrantable intrusion. I meekly tried to tell him all over again, whereupon he said: "We are not in need of an agent in New Haven, Connecticut; the State is altogether too small for our extensive province in the pianoforte business. Besides, we have a man who looks after the occasional demand for a piano in that section, and you need not trouble to inquire further." It did not take me long to understand my man, and instead of bothering to stop at station number five, I turned to the other scribes and asked to see the Baron himself.

Now any one who dared to make such a demand was looked upon as a great man, and I was



immediately treated with respect, and politely directed to a gentleman who sat in a small inclosure at the farther end of the room. I used my new speech this time, and succeeded in stating my case quite clearly, but I was told in a short and concise manner that there was no opening for me. I left the house in disgust and took the first train back to New Haven, telling my good wife of my experience. I was so indignant at the treatment I had received that I took a solemn oath never to approach them again, but Mrs. Steinert after a time pacified me and I made up my mind to try it once more, and started again for the House of the Barons, accompanied by Mrs. Steinert, and supplied with a number of letters from prominent men in New York City as to my ability and integrity. I also took with me my journal, showing my sales of "Mathushek" pianos, and the prices which I had received for them. These letters and the presence of Mrs. Steinert gained immediate admission to the Baron, who, after reading the letters and looking over my sales, consented to sell me pianos, the conditions being that I must furnish a bondsman and pay cash every thirty days on my purchases; which terms I gladly accepted and carried out. I did a good business for the house and, as I also sold pianos of other makes, my sales were considerable. By this time I had outgrown my little Grand Avenue store, and I leased a desirable one on Chapel Street, New Haven's most attractive business centre.

After the *fiasco* of my Dutch-Yankee band at the Gough temperance lecture I felt that orchestral music in New Haven had received a crushing blow,



ENGLISH SPINET. FIVE OCTAVES.

Made by Johannes Hitchcock, 1750.



but as I was deeply interested in music, I organized a string quartet, and while we did not make any pretensions to greatness, when compared with such quartets as existed in New York and Boston, it would be an injustice to the artists should I call it an apology for a quartet, for we certainly played in good tune and time and with some timbre, though our technique and its resulting tone-production was of a diminutive kind. We gave a number of recitals which were really creditable, and which were also successful financially. There were even then in the city some true patrons of music of the class we interpreted, who attended our rehearsals and gave us encouragement to go ahead with the work we were interested in studying, and among the most prominent and helpful ones I must mention Mrs. Larned, wife of Professor W. A. Larned of Yale, and most especially a charming young lady of the highest literary attainments and musical culture, Miss Justine Ingersoll, daughter of former Governor Ingersoll of Connecticut. These quartets were given yearly, first in Brewster's Hall and afterwards in the Athenæum on Church Street. I also gave a series of orchestral concerts every Monday night in Brewster's Hall, the orchestra made up of musicians from Hartford, Bridgeport, and New Haven.

Being now fully initiated in the music business I determined to make it a success, and having no capital I had to think of some plan to carry on a large business and make good profits without it. This problem was a serious one, but I looked at the main principle underlying my future plans, and found that it was made up of two words, *Good*

*Credit.* In other words, I decided to avail myself of the greatest amount of credit possible from piano-forte manufacturers; to buy their pianos at the lowest figure, less than that usually given for a cash sale, and on very long credit; to sell them as quickly as possible and at the largest profit; with this money to meet the first month's payment, but always to have four or five months ahead, or whatever time I was able to obtain, and with the money for the sales invest in other pianos which could be sold for less money, and on credit or the instalment plan. I made "Credit" my god, and did a remarkable business until the hard times of 1869, when, like every one else, I was for a time in a critical financial condition. Still I was hopeful, for I found that I could always find friends who, for the sake of their great interest in me, would lend me money at from *twelve to fifteen* per cent., and when I could not get what I needed at the bank I permitted them to thus generously befriend me.

As the hard times increased and business fell off and my notes came due, I awoke to the realization that something must be done. "Sell at smaller profits," said my clerk; but I knew that I could not pay my notes with less profit, and as all I had in the world was my credit, I decided to try and sell pianos, not for smaller but larger profits—to sell them to the hard men, the money-bags, who never buy luxuries unless they think that they are buying them cheap. I had hardly framed this resolution, when one day a man whom I knew to be very rich and very penurious, came to me and said: "I want to buy a piano for my daughter. I suppose they are

cheap now, Mr. Steinert ? ” “ Cheap ! ” I replied. “ You can buy them at your own price to-day. ” Whereupon he selected one of the best instruments in the store, and asked me the price, and I, knowing my man and remembering my plan, named a price which would give me a large profit, and, after considerable bargaining, he bought the piano at about fifty dollars above the usual asking price. He was only one of a class of hard-fisted men who endeavored to take advantage of the stagnation in business and buy things that, under other conditions, they would never have thought of buying, and from them I made a good profit which helped me to keep my credit afloat.

But that was not enough ; and I called forth every ability within me, and, organizing a small orchestra, I played every night for dancing, finally looking at my growing family to find if possible among them something that I could utilize. There I found my daughter, Heloise, and my son, Henry, and I immediately determined to put them into the harness and let them help. I trained them to play concert music with me, and we played classical music for piano, violin, and violoncello, each one appearing as soloist on the respective instruments,—Heloise the piano, Henry the violin, and I the violoncello ; and we played every Sunday night for the German societies, while every Monday evening, Henry and I, with our orchestra, played for dances, my cook and chambermaid being among the happy, pleasure-seeking company, for, even if I worked all day and all night and had no capital, I lived like a prince. Upon several occasions my cook and her partner

came to me and asked me to play a Strauss waltz, or my chambermaid wanted a polka, which I cheerfully called upon the orchestra to play, as, for the sake of my god, "Credit," I was their servant on Monday nights, while they belonged to me for the rest of the week.

I did a large business with all the manufacturers, and they considered me a remarkably successful agent, and my credit became absolute, *Unlimited*. With all this, having a large and growing family, for there were now nine children to be clothed and fed, I could not see, with all my work, any road ahead that led to riches, and I had promised myself to be a rich man. If I did not, therefore, get rich, there must be something wrong with my business methods; so I surveyed the territory about me, and asked myself whether I were not too big a gun for the small community where I lived, and, as I always thought I was a little smarter than the next man, I concluded that my coat was too small for me, and I looked for a larger one. I was fond of New Haven, but I fancied that there might be other cities where the inhabitants were more liberal and could be of greater benefit to me than my townfolk. I well knew that my success in life depended upon what I could gain from the people, so I concluded to branch out and enlarge my business by going to another city, and at the same time to keep the foothold I had gained in New Haven. To do this I had to have assistance, and I made use of my sons, Henry and Alexander, who were respectively nineteen and seventeen years of age. I therefore harnessed them into my business van, and with them

I went to Providence, Rhode Island, where I rented a store for three thousand dollars a year, stocked it with pianos and musical wares, which I obtained on credit, advertised the business, and left my boys in charge, spending three days there every week drumming up trade, and from the very beginning I made money, and a good deal of it too. Influenced by my success in Providence, I turned my eyes towards Boston as a good field for an enterprising man, and, using my credit still further, I went to the "Hub," where I met with even greater success. The Boston house I gave to the management of my second son, Alexander, who, with the assistance of his brother Frederick, soon made an inroad into the pianoforte business of the "Hub." Boston proved to be a more lucrative place than Providence and New Haven together, and as my sons became partners when they reached their twenty-first birthday, we felt that we were a very happy family. The conservative ways of Boston music dealers made it an easy task for Connecticut hustlers, and we soon let them know that we were in the city, and as we had no other aspiration than to make a reputation and money we were satisfied. At the beginning of this chapter I said that I was determined to be a success as a business man, and both my sons and myself looked to this motto as the principle of our business life.

My early struggles, and those that were even at this time surrounding me, taught me that the man who has no money has nothing to say in this world, while the man who has money has everything to say,—not that I look upon money as the elixir of life,



or that I love it, or love to work in order to make it; not that I became a piano-dealer by the grace of God, or that I admired that particular profession. Not at all; I simply selected it as a means of support, and thought it a good way of making money even when I should become disgusted with it and resolved to work no more. I never believed that money was the root of all evil, but rather looked upon it as a tree upon which grew the sweet flowers of comfort, pleasure, and happiness. From experience I knew what it was to be without money, and so for variety's sake, if nothing more, I wanted to know what it was to have plenty of it. For these reasons I determined to utilize every ability to that end, honestly, conscientiously, and in keeping with the highest ideal of morality. To speak plainly, I wanted to exchange pianos for money, and at a good profit, for it was for large rather than small profits that I worked. I well knew that I was dependent upon the large amount of business I could do to feed the hungry wolves of manufacturers, so I used their money as credit while I appealed to the generosity and good-will of the public for such profits as would keep me from bankruptcy and despair. I also realized that I was dealing with a liberal and cultured class of people; I understood the social position of the New Englander, knew that he liked good things, and that he was always willing to pay for them, and I thought that I was the chosen one to gratify his demands.

I had trained my sons from their boyhood in the art of music. They lived in a musical atmosphere, having it served to them morning, noon, and night;

so when I put them into active service they were competent, for I had laid quite as much stress upon their being able to play the piano well as upon their ability to give the customary "gush" that accompanies a sale; in other words, they had been taught to let the piano speak for itself. I availed myself personally of certain musical gifts which I possessed, playing my instrument in accordance with the characteristics which were inherent in my customer. Having some knowledge of human nature, I preferred to use my influence through the medium of tone, harmony, and rhythm, playing such music as would appear in keeping with the emotional nature of the purchaser, interesting him, if possible, in the mysteries of tonal art, and holding him spellbound. I fully realized that as a piano dealer I had many competitors, but in my peculiar method of disposing of an instrument and in controlling my customer, I felt that I had few. Such an assertion from one who writes his own experience may sound immodest, but better appear immodest than admit that I did not fully understand myself and my talents.

There is hardly a human being that is not fond of music, for as the human eye is either charmed or horrified as it looks at things spread out before it, and experiences pleasant or unpleasant sensations, so the human ear, with its mysterious work, receives sensations which come from another world than that which exists for the eye. A world of greater spirituality and more profound happiness belongs to the little organ which we call the ear, and though many things greet it unpleasantly, like the discharge of a cannon or the sudden noises that are created by

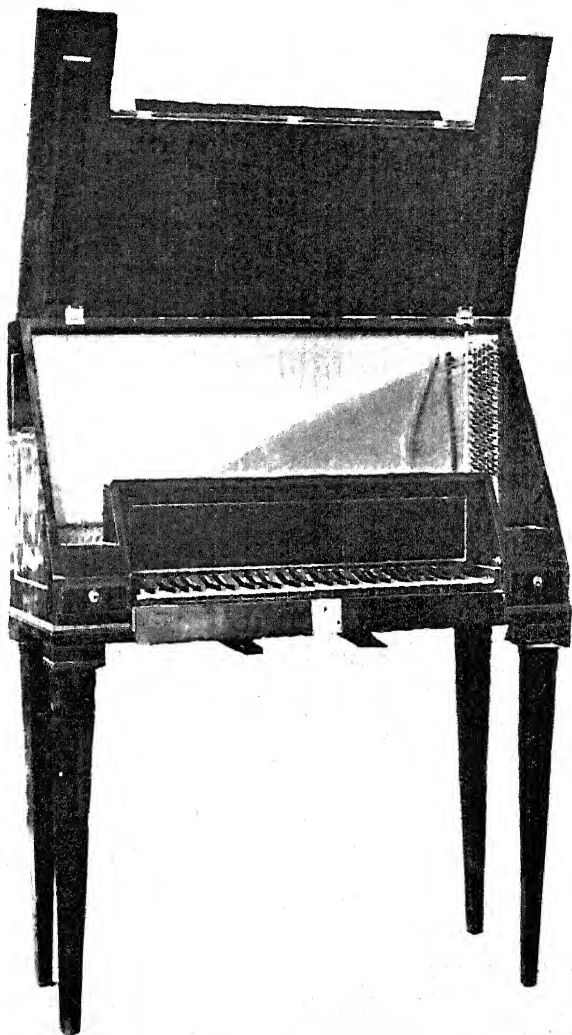
nature or circumstances, it is also treated to delightful contrasts, such as the euphonious sounds of speech, the musical tones found in song, the unspeakable wealth of a stringed instrument, the refined vibrations that enter the tube of a flute, clarionet, French horn, or oboe, which when created and properly controlled by a virtuoso cannot fail to move the heart of the listener, and especially the uninitiated, who hears its hypnotizing effect for the first time. Like the orator or the actor, the musician, by means of the musical tones under his control, can more greatly appeal to and influence such classes of humanity as do not belong to the chosen ones who worship at the shrine of Orpheus,—and so I must confess that the power given to the true musician to move the world was used by me for purposes so vulgar and of such a nature as the furtherance of my business. If I look upon the humorous side when I applied my hypnotizing art upon the different subjects that exchanged their good money for my poor pianos, my great results as a musical salesman, and the bargains I made with them, I must admit that there was not only money but lots of poetry in the pianoforte business after all. In order to fully illustrate the *modus operandi* that served me through music as the handmaid to my pocket-book, I will let my readers look at my art openly and squarely, and should I succeed in creating a new school for the unfortunate pianoforte seller, I think I would serve both art and salesmanship honestly.

First on my list is the churchman, a man who had served his apprenticeship in the Sunday-school.

My appeal to him had to be made through suitable music. For instance, I usually played *Shall We Gather at the River*; but if my man was of middle age, having grown gray in his holy work, I substituted one of the tunes that once upon a time gave such hope and prospective happiness to the young Christian, as *Jesus, Lover of My Soul*; this, played in the key of F, always clinched the bargain with the devoted citizen. Such program music to the Irish-woman who carried the price of the piano with her in her stocking would have acted very disastrously upon her merry temperament, for it is the Irish dance rhythm found in reels and jigs that interests her, and all I had to do was to keep my eye on her foot, and the moment she began to move her light fantastic toe in time to the jig I was hammering out of my instrument, the piano was sold and I had her money. The German piano customer is of a different class, and had to be subjected to an entirely different course of treatment. The *Sweet Bye and Bye* or *The Irish Washerwoman* "cut no ice" with him. He is a patriot; he loves his Kaiser and his beer. His movements in the dance are subject to the rhythms of the gliding waltz, and he who has once served as a soldier in the glorious army of the Kaiser still retains the echoes of martial music, and the German, not the Sousa March, is in his brain; and *The Beautiful Blue Danube Waltz*, *Die Wacht am Rhein*, or, as he is always a member of the Männerchor Singing Society, he aspires high and envelops himself in Kreutzer's *Es ist der Tag des Herrn*, or *Die Kapelle*. If I gave my instrument such emphasis as to bring out the patriotic, the heroic, and

the *gemüthliche* feeling of the Teutonic purchaser, the shekels ran into my coffers.

But the poetical forces, the refinement of the musical salesman can be beautifully demonstrated when an American woman of any age enters the wareroom in search of a piano,—she who dearly loves music, and hastens to assure you that she invariably falls asleep to its soothing strains; that she is so passionately fond of it that she can go without eating or drinking if she can only listen to sweet music, and that she never tires of it. She loves the opera, and she thinks singing quite beyond anything else in the world,—something simply grand. She has listened to all the operas she has ever heard of, and she can hum them all by ear or play them on the piano, and it is really not remarkable that she can do this because she so dearly loves music. She assures you that Paderewski's playing is heavenly, that she is simply dying to meet him, and that she would willingly walk ten miles to hear him play and pay five dollars for her ticket besides. She thinks that any one who has not heard Paderewski play does not know or appreciate what life is. She is so earnest in her love for the divine and heavenly art that she places her fingers caressingly on the keys of the piano and plays some snatches of Chopin, looking into your eyes the while, and growing more friendly. Finally, in a burst of confidence, she tells you that she comes from a very musical family; her father, who just died—she stops her soulful playing to brush away a tear—was a great musician, and leader of the choir, while her mother was one of



UPRIGHT HAMMER-CLAVIER. FOUR AND A HALF OCTAVES. 1780.



the loveliest alto singers in the State, — that her voice was so powerful and yet so sweet and mellow, that it could be heard half a mile away, and furthermore — she has now commenced to play the Chopin C-sharp-minor nocturne — that she has inherited her talent from her father's side, for her grandfather was a great performer on the bugle, and he also played the bass viol in the choir for fifty years. These and many more such assurances from the accomplished musician convince me that 'most any piano will do, and it is the cheapest plan to let her revel in her glorious art. Let her sit and play, for she will not permit any rivalry, and if I attempt to show her that I, too, can play on occasions, she immediately becomes angry and the sale is lost. After many years in the business, I assure you that all you have to do with such a customer is to praise her efforts, assure her that she is a great musician, and keep her playing. If you are careful not to say anything in praise of the piano, nine times out of ten you will get her money — if she has any, which is doubtful.

Then there is the Hebrew, who, having made a lot of money in America, wants to buy a piano for his daughter, and buy it cheap. For forty years I have tried to find some style of music that appeals to him, and although I have patiently gone through the entire list of composers, starting in with songs sung long before Moses wrote, or did n't write, the Pentateuch, I must admit my failure to ever, for a second, hypnotize him by music of any class. The Hebrew never looks beyond the polished case and the price. He wants the largest, by all means; so



to those who are to come after me, I shall say, when the Hebrew comes in to buy a piano, show him one that is conspicuous by reason of its size and high polish, and then talk. Never mind opening the instrument, or playing upon it, or telling him the name of the maker. It's the price he wants, and if you are blest with the gift of gab, and if you have started in with a price sufficiently high to admit of many reductions, you may be able to drive a bargain before night,—that is, if you are sharper than he is.

Being now fully initiated in the workings of the trade, and being considered a prosperous man among the New Englanders, I cast my eyes upon the Western horizon, for I remembered the old German saying that *Hinter den Bergen wohnen auch Menschen*,—"Behind the mountains there are other people,"—and as I had heard of the fortunes made in the Western country, I prevailed one day upon the Barons and the plebeian pianoforte manufacturers to give their consent to be represented in Cincinnati. I had seven sons and could safely spare a few to harness to the Western end of the business van. So I selected my eldest son, Henry; and his brother William for the missionary field, placing Edward in charge of the Providence house. I gave the boys a handsome stock of instruments, and along with them my blessing, and they opened a large establishment in Cincinnati. As I was not there with them, I cannot say whether they ever established a business, but can only state that their letters were hopeful and naturally gave me great encouragement. I soon realized, however, that the practical results were not in keeping with their let-

ters, and after a year or two, and after going there myself and investigating the cause of our non-success, I decided that the West, unlike the East, did not show blind loyalty and allegiance to the Barons, and while they were always ready to listen to a pianist who travelled through that section advertising the Baron's pianos, they were disinclined to buy and pay the price demanded for the instrument upon which he played. So while the hired man was paid by the Barons to show their pianos, the public took stock only in his playing, and bought their pianos from another maker, and the Barons were at the disadvantage of advertising for others.

My non-success in Cincinnati did not have a soothing effect upon the House of the Barons in the East, and in consequence many slurring remarks were made by them to me. They were, however, well aware of my oath of allegiance and my sincerity, and felt sure of my loyalty towards them, and while I could not guarantee such loyalty from my dear offspring, the thought that I was all right was comforting to me. I finally appealed to my boys, telling them to forcibly introduce and sell the art production of the Barons in the West, but I was told by them that the Western men failed to see the superiority of the baronial wares over those of more plebeian make; and inasmuch as the West was quite aware of her ability to produce fine instruments in response to the demands of the people, she felt herself capable of making as good pianos as any one else in America or Europe. She was also aware of her ability to produce them at a fair price, and, as she was confident of the

support she would receive, to make a good profit besides. This information was hardly calculated to be imparted to the Barons, as it carried with it quite a little treason, and as I wanted to be on good terms with them I advised them of my willingness to withdraw from the Western market, and sell out to any one who could work to greater advantage for them. My suggestion found a ready response, and soon a large and old Western house which had been in the business for over sixty years bought my interest, and I took my money and gracefully withdrew, returning to my peaceful Eastern abode. There was great rejoicing East and West when this deal was consummated, and hope again dawned upon the baronial horizon, for my successors invested largely in their pianos. But alas! after a few years of hard work and many sacrifices, this Western firm made an assignment. Not yet satisfied with the failure of their goods in the West, the Barons put their own shoulders to the wheel, and established business houses in all of the large cities of the West, under their own management, and after trying their fortune and undeniable skill they repeated my success (?) and finally withdrew their forces.

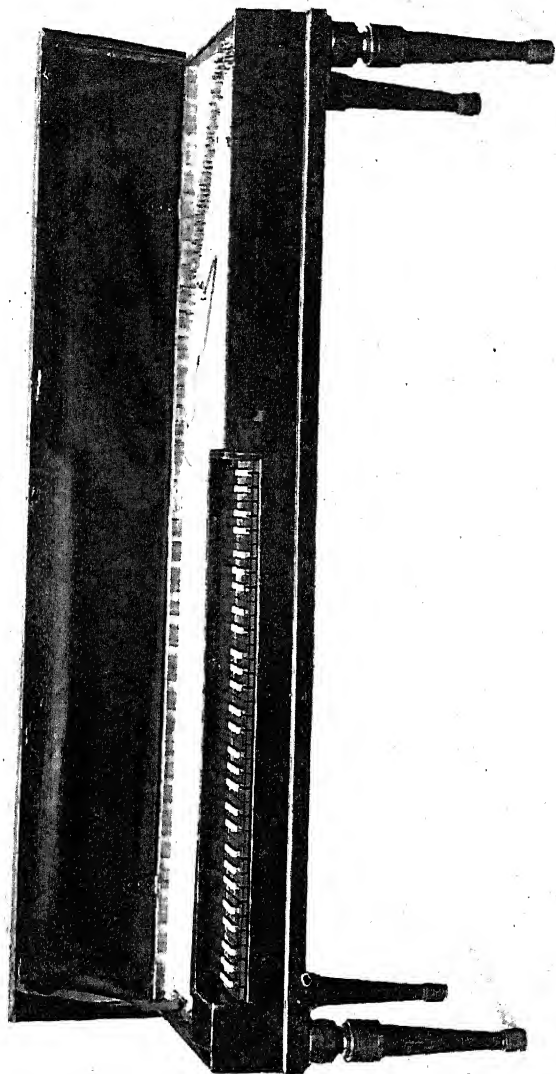
Having lost some money in my Western experiment, and being a little cast down thereat, Dame Fortune came to me one day and in her sweet manner beckoned to me with her magic wand, and with her angelic voice, like the siren song of the Lorelei, told me that she had come to cheer and console me, and that her horn of plenty was running over with bright, shining gold pieces which would roll into my lap if I felt inclined to receive them. I threw her a

kiss, bowed my knee to her as she vanished, and her words were followed by an offer of two hundred thousand dollars for the renouncement of the lease of my Boston store. This offer was made by a syndicate who intended to build a mammoth hotel upon the site, to be called the "Touraine." Mr. Alexander Porter made to my son, Alexander, an initiatory offer of fifty thousand dollars, raising his offer to one hundred thousand dollars almost immediately, and when my son submitted the proposal to me, I deemed myself the chosen one to step in for further hearing. Mr. Porter told me that his syndicate was very anxious to have the place, and that they would willingly pay me one hundred thousand dollars; whereupon I answered him that in consideration of this two hundred thousand dollars would be the right figure, and my offer was accepted.

Up to this time I had fully accomplished my purpose of making a lot of money out of the pianoforte business and the people who bought that instrument, and while I thought that I had done nobly so far as I was concerned, I felt somewhat inclined to doubt whether the people who bought the pianos and paid me good profits had received the full value which they honestly bargained for. When I considered the musical deficiency of the piano in comparison to its prototypes, such as the clavichord, harpsichord, and very early hammer clavier, and the claims made by the Barons as to its value, I concluded that "something was wrong in Denmark." I well remembered the sweet and soft tones of the clavichord that once upon a time belonged to my teacher, the old cantor of Scheinfeld, and which after his death had come

into my possession. I also recalled a harpsichord that stood silent in the little cell of my good and noble instructor, Padre Quartian; while ever and anon, I heard the silvery tones of an early hammer clavier that rested in the sacristy of the old monastery at Schwarzenberg. While these old friends did not speak in brazen tones, while they lacked the clash and noise that is found in the domicile of the baronial instrument, they were subject to the sympathetic touch of the player and responded to the poetical emotions, to grief and sorrow, to joy and gladness,—in fact, they were capable of expressing the very sentiments that are inherent and find their resting-place in the heart of the sufferer and those who enjoy the noble influences given us so freely. I therefore resolved to find again my old clavichord—that quaint little instrument with its silent tones, its mysterious whisperings, its intimate and soulful response always evoked from it by the fingers of the tone poet.





CLAVICHORD. FIVE AND ONE FOURTH OCTAVES. "UNGEBUNDEN."  
Made by Michael Voit & Son.



## CHAPTER X

Return to Scheinfeld—Collecting Old Instruments—Death-Violin—  
First Lecture Tour in America

IT was after an absence of almost forty years that I took passage on a steamer for Bremen, accompanied by my wife and daughter Mollie,—partly to avail myself of medical advice for Mrs. Steinert, who was stricken with the primary symptoms of paralysis agitans, and partly to again visit Scheinfeld and find my beloved clavichord.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the vicissitudes of the journey occasioned by my wife's health, and after consulting several of the most eminent physicians in France and Germany, I left my family in Heidelberg under the care of Professor Erb and started for Scheinfeld.

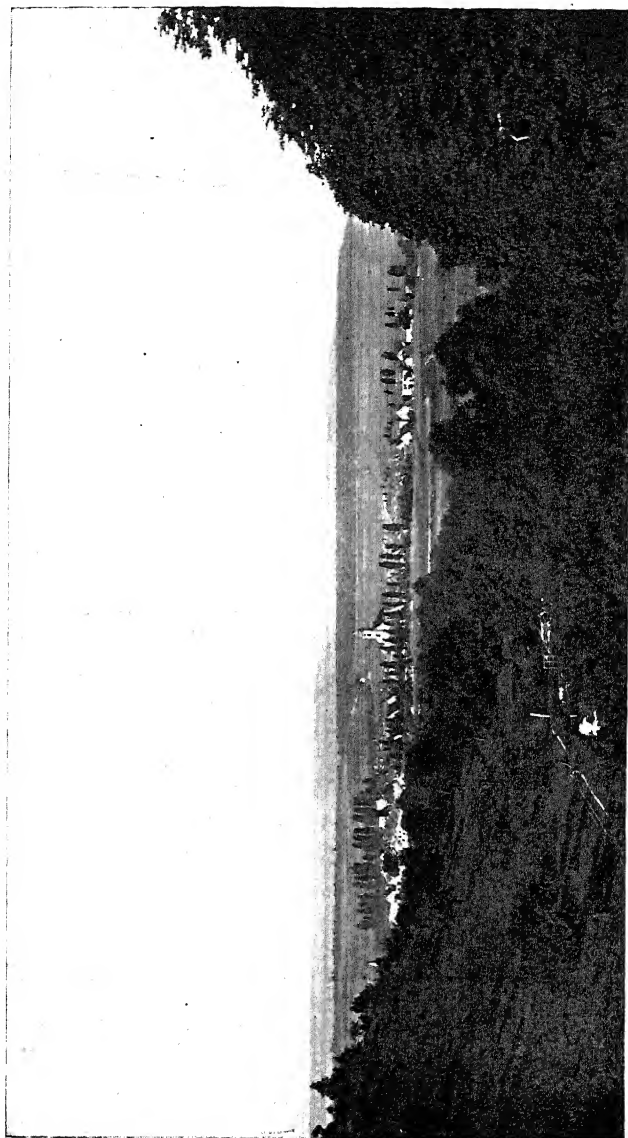
As I approached the little village the scenery appeared to me like an old friend,—on one side the little clump of woods, fragrant with the odor of the pine, on the other a rye-field dotted here and there with blue corn-flowers which courtesied to me as I passed; here a cross-road with the image of the Holy Virgin holding her child in her arms, and before me in the distance the church spire, white and solitary amid the leafy green trees.

As I entered the hamlet the church clock struck twelve, and the reapers, ready for their midday meal, came trooping in from the meadows, their scythes on their shoulders, the women bearing on their broad backs baskets heaped high with fresh-cut grass.

My arrival created a sensation, for a carriage with a gentleman in it was an unusual sight, and I could see by the faces of the townfolk as we drove past that they were curious to find out who I was and what I was doing in Scheinfeld. I approached the inn, "Zum Ross," and there got out. The honest wife of the innkeeper was no less curious than the rest of the villagers, and she courtesied as she greeted me with the words, "*Grüss Gott*," and assisted me with my luggage. But she was quick-witted, I assure you, for no sooner was my back turned than she questioned the driver, and learning that I was an American traveller named Steinert, she ran to me holding out both hands, crying out in her joy: "*Heilige Maria, Mutter Gottes, da ist ja der Herr Steinert!* Where do you come from? We have expected you for a long time. The whole village waits for you, and if I had known it before, I would have killed a little gosling and roasted for you the partridge which my good man shot but this morning. *Ach Gott!* I am so happy. Babetta! Babetta! Go bring a tankard of beer for Herr Steinert." This was my welcome home.

I entered the "Ross." Everything was just as it was fifty years ago when as a boy I used to get beer for the folks at home: the old stove in the middle of the room, the same wooden benches nailed





SCHEINFELD FROM THE DISTANCE.



along the wall, the tables with their claw-like legs, the small windows,—even the white sand upon the floor had not given way to a carpet. To the door I ran, and looking behind it I saw the old cracked slate with the little piece of chalk suspended by a bit of string, and still serving as a ledger for the nightly gatherings. In fact, the little hamlet was exactly the same as when I left, with the exception that two or three new houses had been built.

If the place had changed so little, I could not say the same of its impression upon me, for as I walked down the street, which to my boyish eyes had appeared so broad and long, and looked at the houses which I had always thought extremely large and commodious, I rubbed my eyes to see if I were really awake, for everything had become so small,—the streets so narrow, so primitive. I looked around for the people that used to swarm its streets, then at the church, whose spire, I remembered, had seemed lost in the clouds. Alas! I had just come from Cologne and the Dom, and the quaint white building with the cross had shrivelled up and the steeple dwindled down to almost a toy one. My school-mates, formerly giants in strength, alone seemed unchanged. True, they had grown old, and their eyes did not sparkle with the fire of youth, and their fresh, young faces were seamed and wrinkled, but their laugh was as hearty, their heart as young, and their enjoyment of life even keener than when I left them thirty-three years before. The grandchildren of the pretty maidens I used to play with in the goose meadow, and for whom I wound wreaths in the spring of their youth and beauty,

now brought me fresh nosegays from the dale and twined garlands for me as their grandmothers had done in the sweet past. Oh, it was all so beautiful! Home, sweet home! from whose idyllic quiet I have been too long absent. Thou art still the little modest village, safe in thy isolation from the progress of the world. In thy arms I again find all that is sweet and beautiful. In thy holy rest, long-forgotten memories are awakened and live again.

When I retired that evening the pictures of the day reappeared before my eyes, and I know they will never again forsake me as long as memory lasts. As I lay awake and went over the events of my life, I realized that every one is the bearer of his luck or his ill-luck, that each man through his brain and his will can create a world, and that he has it in his power to make life a happy one. As I meditated, a voice was borne to me from out the still night, and I could make out the words:

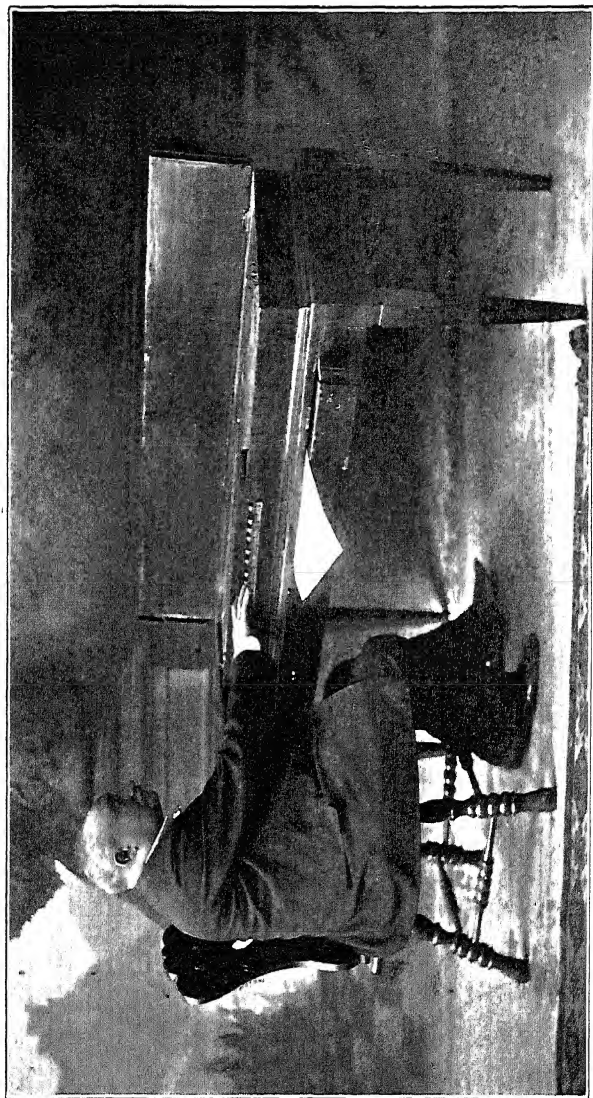
“Hört Ihr Leut und last euch sagen  
Die Uhr hat Zehn geschlagen  
Bewart das Feuer und das Licht  
Das euch kein Unglück g’schlicht  
Gelobt sei Jesus Christus.”

It was the old night-watch, and springing from my bed I ran to the window, threw open the lattice. As his horn echoed three times from the hill of Schwarzenberg, and, chanting his little rhyme, he passed on down the street, I stood lost in the flood of sweet memories, and that night in the little “Ross” I was again the happy Scheinfeld boy in the home of my sainted mother.

After a few days in my native town, I began the search for my clavichord, which, according to information received from my brother Louis, then residing in Coblenz, had been left in Scheinfeld, as it was so old and dilapidated that he considered it a useless piece of furniture; he also stated that he had no record of it. I was not daunted, however, and after a day's search I succeeded in tracing it to the tower abode of old Dazian, who must have taken it after my brother left. I was told that Dazian had died many years before, that his successor, his brother Joseph, had also passed beyond, and that Herr Bayer now held the position of Stadt Musikus. Going to the tower, I mounted the steep, winding stairs to the living-rooms, in search of Herr Bayer. Very much out of breath, I knocked at the door and inquired of the pleasant-faced elderly woman who opened it for the Herr Stadt Musikus, and was told by her that he was in the field hoeing potatoes. Descending, I hastened to him, and recognized him as the flute-player of old Dazian's band. He was now a man of seventy-five years, aged and bent. We exchanged greetings, for he well remembered me as the boy taught by his uncle, and he also knew that I now lived in America. Herr Bayer had before him a large basket which was full of potatoes, and which, by my help, he strapped upon his back, and together we started for his tower home. Upon asking him about my old clavichord, he told me that his uncle had an old clavichord which must have belonged to the Steinert family, that he had kept it for many years, using it to compose and arrange music, and that it was in the old

tower. Again I mounted the steep stairs, the old musician in advance with his potatoes on his back, and entering the principal living-room saw the old clavichord standing in one corner. With my heart full of joy I purchased the instrument, and, what is more, the violoncello upon which I took my first lesson, half a dozen violins, and several violas, all instruments which belonged to and were loved by my old instructor, Dazian.

I was deeply interested in collecting old instruments that were used in the past, and that must have served the great composers of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early part of the nineteenth century, and I based my work upon a closer investigation than the accepted view of our modern musicians, who think that the compositions of these classical tone poets sound better when played upon the present pianoforte. With this opinion I could not agree, and I ascribed their wrong views on the subject to their ignorance and unacquaintance with the instruments I speak of, and though the modern musician uses the pianoforte unquestioningly as the proper tone vehicle, I was firmly convinced that the old instruments were the right ones for a true interpretation of the old masters, and that the pianoforte was not adapted to the polyphony of that time. I was, however, well aware of their limitations in tonal power, and that for this reason they were not consistent with the requirements of the modern age. I was not looking for developments, but for the germs of the instrument that gave expression to the musical effusions of the old masters, and that with inexpressible sweetness, elasticity



M. STEINERT AT CLAVICHORD.





of touch, indescribable color, contained sufficient power to demonstrate to the music lover and enthusiast the spirituality that lay inherent in Bach, Handel, Scarlatti, and even Haydn and Mozart.

In the soft and sweet-toned clavichord I recognized a germ of tremendous power, a germ which, if properly developed and brought out, would give to the world an instrument that would cover, not only the requirements of the past, but the demands of the present as well. This was one of my thoughts when I began my investigation upon the quaint and dilapidated clavichord in the small, dark, and unfriendly room of the Stadt Musikus in far-away Scheinfeld, and which thought had haunted me for many years, and has occupied my waking moments ever since. It was an idea that found its cradle in the movement of the bow held in the hand of a player, rubbing a string, and which in its rude technique refines and produces vibrations which are capable of moving the human heart in all its changeable moods. I also remembered the magical tones of the French horn, its subdued and muted color, differing so greatly from those sounds that underlie another tone-production such as is found in the reed instruments, the clarinet and the oboe, and while all are subject to their constructive nature, they are endowed with characteristics of their own which give color and expression to a living tone. I was also aware that the pianoforte was incapable of doing this, being colorless and inexpressive, and I wanted to alleviate the condition of the pianoforte, to lift it out of its cold and unsympathetic state, and to transform it also

into an instrument full of warmth and poetic daintiness. I knew that time had supplied it with a robust nature, that it revelled in its manly strength, that it had great boldness and courage stored away in its body; in short, that it was essentially masculine in its defiance to nature's elements; that it lacked femininity, tenderness, and sympathy; that it did not possess the soft and soul-inspiring elements that come from another world than the one to which it belonged.

To get at the root of the evil, I wanted to enter into the state of a keyed instrument of the foregoing ages, to see the instrument as it came from the hands of one who was not a skilled artisan, but rather a musician who built his own instrument in requirement to his needs, as did old Bach. I therefore looked for such as were constructed by cabinet-makers, by watchmakers, by geniuses of all trades, so that I might have a kaleidoscopic picture of what the human mind conceives in one direction. I wanted to throw myself into their very midst, to stand upon the same stage with them, but with the object of serving the modern age.

For this I needed many instruments, and as Scheinfeld was so happily located as to its geographical position as well as its historical and religious state, I did not miscalculate in finding the very spot which would unfold before my eyes hidden treasures of great value in my researches, — geographically, because Scheinfeld and its surrounding country is situated away from large cities, in a section where the spirit of time has as yet made no inroads; historically and religiously, because it is rich

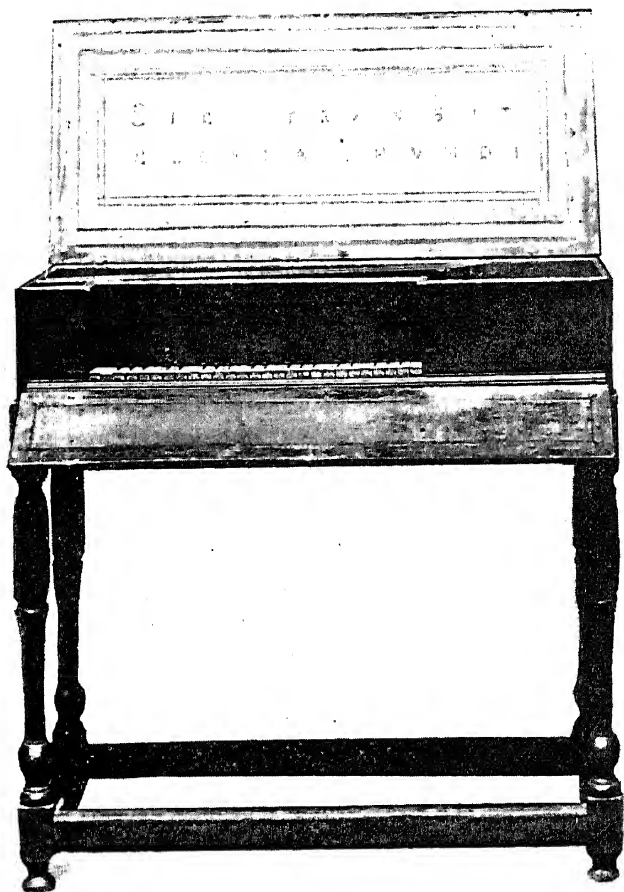
in the possession of numberless monasteries and convents of a time when the priesthood had full sway over the civil powers and destinies of its citizens ; for the priests were the rulers, and these priestly princes fostered the fine arts, cultivating music, especially, in their lonely cells, for art then rested in the bosom of the Church, and such an instrument as the clavichord must have been akin to their spiritual nature. I also knew that about a hundred years ago a new spirit of freedom had come over the people living in that country, and that saintly men and women were obliged to fly from the persecutions of the promoters of the new régime, and that in their flight they had left behind the very treasures that gave them such solace and endeared them so greatly to the people. These treasures were either confiscated or came into the possession of the common people, principally the peasantry, and they, having passed away, their descendants had lost sight of them, especially when they were stored away in such places as were never frequented by the family.

With the possession of such knowledge I began my search for old instruments, and I am happy to say that I found all I wanted. I found them hidden away under the eaves of many an old house, in the débris of a barn or cow-shed, often in the dove-cotes, and many treasures were unearthed from the damp cellar where for years they had rested in a thick coat of mould. As the owners were unaware of such treasures, the difficulty on my part was in convincing them that old instruments were really somewhere on the premises, and as they were bound

to deny such ownership, I was equally bound to strengthen my assertion by a search for them, for which permission was reluctantly granted me after such inducements as the offer of a glass of beer or a cigar, and I was allowed to take a candle and accompany them all over the place. I usually found one and sometimes two to add to my collection,—and the price, I assure you, differed greatly from that demanded for baronial productions.

I must herein state that these instruments were totally unfit for use, that they were broken in body but rich in soul, though they no longer had strings. The fascination connected with my hunt for old clavichords, harpsichords, and hammer claviers, cannot be described in its quaintness and romantic interest, or in its humorous side, for many a rare old spinet or clavichord, as I play upon it to-day, seems to have become imbued with the humorous episode connected with its final acceptance of my heart and home.

One morning when, with the exception of the feathered songsters, everything appeared wrapped in silence, I walked down through the meadow, blue with waving corn-flowers, and stopped to watch the villagers at work close by, their faces beaming with content as they swung their scythes and talked. My heart was stirred by the peaceful scene spread out before me, and when I walked across the bridge which spans the rippling brook, and which is the dividing line between the villages of Scheinfeld and Schnodsenbach, and reached the latter and looked upon the mediæval houses, I felt that the rural landscape was complete.



SPINET. THREE AND THREE QUARTER OCTAVES.

Made by Andreas Ruckers, 1620.



It was noon, and I heard the melodious tones of the mid-day bell. All else was silent, and yet—what tones are wafted to my ear? Musical sounds? Yes, surely, and amazed I quickened my steps and approached the little hut from which the sounds seemed to come, and as I drew near I recognized the magical tones of the violin, though the player fell far short of being a virtuoso, and his repertoire was not made up of classical music, but the simple soulful folk-songs.

Was it in consequence of my own mood, or of that of the performer, that I noticed a strange ring in the tone? The violin resounded in such tender strains, breathed in its notes such pain and unfulfilled longing, that I involuntarily stepped into the living-room of the cottage. The player was seated upon a rude wooden bench, his wife beside him, while two children played upon the floor. As I entered he put down his violin, and in an embarrassed manner rose and bade me welcome. I offered him my hand, spoke to him, and after a moment we were talking quite familiarly. He told me that he was a wagon-wright, and that the little house served as his workshop and dwelling. Poverty looked out from every corner, and there was an absence of such furniture as is deemed necessary by even the poorer classes, and yet he had been playing upon a violin worthy to grace a royal palace. What a contrast! The violin, like the hut, was the very picture of poverty, for its once shapely neck was bent and it was in a nude condition, its rich dress of varnish having entirely disappeared, though it still bore traces of its former noble beauty. Was this perhaps the reason why it had sung its

song in so feeble and plaintive a tone, or had it but indulged in memories of its youth, when, fresh and young and exquisitely beautiful, it had emerged from the hands of its creator, when its raiment shone with bright color and the sunlight delighted to kiss it and to mirror itself in its entrancing loveliness? Was it, perchance, revelling in the memory of the clasp of the artist and his glance of fond love and admiration as he stroked its exquisite neck and its Medusa-like head? Many years have elapsed since that day, was my thought, as I questioned its owner as to whence it had come into his possession. "The violin," said he, "is a legacy from my father, who, in his day, played dances upon it for the village youths and maidens. Yet," and he thoughtfully rubbed his brow, "there is another history connected with the instrument that goes back to the time when my grandfather owned it, for he, like my father, played the violin. I can tell you the story, if you care to listen?" and he looked at me questioningly. "By all means," I replied, rousing myself from my reverie, for I was lost in the memories of the past. After a slight pause he continued:

"Many years ago when the enemy with flaming sword laid bare this peaceful country and when it fell into the hands of its oppressors, there came here with the other hostile soldiers one who became dangerously ill in consequence of the hardships of the campaign just ended. He had dragged his weary limbs to our village, hoping to find shelter, but he was an enemy, and it was everywhere denied him. After being turned away from every door, sick and helpless, he sank down before my grandfather's



gate, overcome by his exertions. Here my grandfather found him, his head pillowed upon his knapsack. He was moaning piteously and calling for water, for his lips were parched with fever, and grandfather, going to the spring, filled a cup and, bringing it to the dying man, lifted his head and gave him a drink. Then, moved to pity by his suffering, he took him into the house and cared for him until he breathed his last.

“ A few hours before his death he asked for his knapsack, and grandfather brought it to him. ‘ Open it,’ he said, ‘ and you will find my violin, which you will please give me; I want to speak to it once again before I die.’ Grandfather opened the knapsack, and taking out the violin handed it to him. The dying soldier seized it eagerly, and pressing it again and again to his lips, wept like a child, then with a last fond kiss he handed it to my grandfather, saying: ‘ Please accept this violin as a proof of my gratitude to an enemy. It has been my faithful and devoted companion ever since I was a boy and learned to express the language of art through its voice, for I have devoted many days and long sleepless nights to gain the power of calling forth from its heart the slumbering strains of truth and love. It has been my comfort and consolation in all my sorrows, and with its lovely song I, too, have often soared to another world. With its melodies I have entranced the great and mighty dwellers in princely halls, and beauteous dames of haughty demeanor have bowed their noble heads to the music of its voice, and wafted it greetings and kisses. I possessed the gift of stirring my listeners

to mirth as well as woe, and my name once resounded through all lands on account of the violin's ravishing power; you may, perchance, have heard my name spoken, it was—but what matters now? it is already enrolled in God's book, and you would not know or remember it if you heard it. One day all was changed, for the trumpet of war rang out throughout the land, 'calling men to fight for their homes. Taking my violin I left home, parents, sweetheart, to offer up my young life here in a hostile land. Upon the bloody battlefield my violin was my consolation.' Saying this, he again took the violin and, with trembling fingers, passed the bow over the strings, calling out tones of sadness and pain. Sadder and sadder grew the strains, until but a tender breath, like an angel's whisper, floated out upon the air, and with this last sigh the violin fell from the grasp of the beatified soldier, and he sank back, dead! It was the violin's 'swan song,' as it remained untouched for many years, my grandfather declaring its tones too gloomy for the dance, and he called it the death-violin. But once it was played by our old schoolmaster during a solemn requiem mass at church, and never have the strains of the 'Agnus Dei' been heard more tenderly uttered than upon this occasion."

I was wonderfully moved by this narrative. I felt myself stirred with a strong desire to possess this violin, but scarcely found courage to express my desire. At length I recalled the poverty, the lack of many comforts which the price of the violin would bring to the peasant and his family, and I said, "Would you feel willing to part with

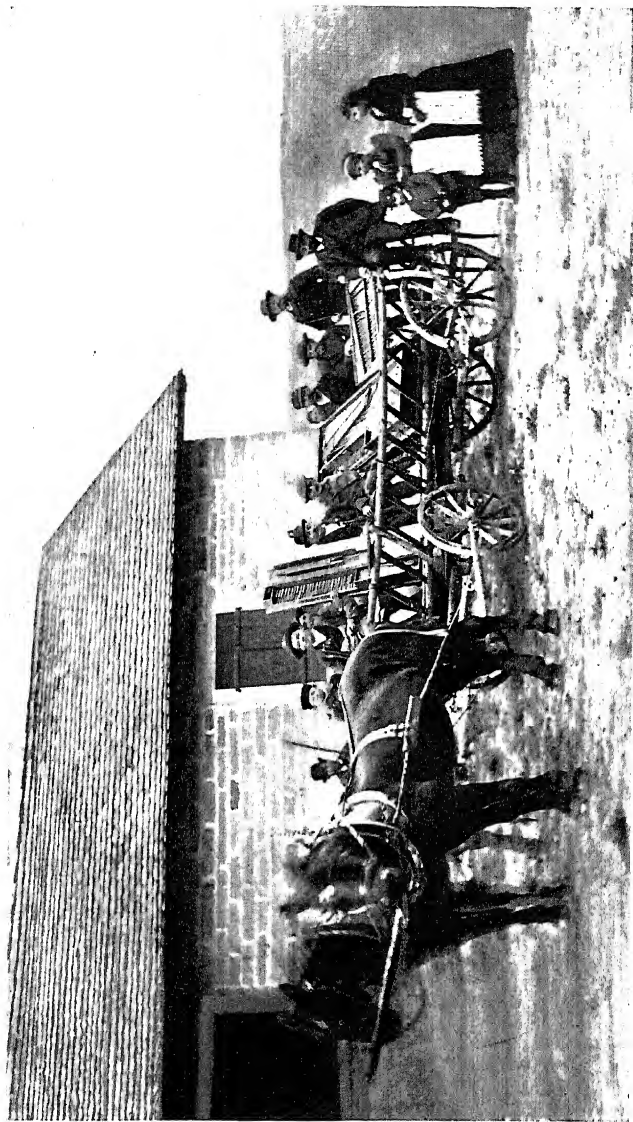
this old violin ? ” After a moment’s hesitation, he replied, “ I have for a long time intended getting it restored, but have never had the money, and I should be willing to let you have it could I be certain that a better fate awaits it in your hands.” And then, as it was an easy matter for me to arrive at an understanding with its owner, the violin soon passed into my hands.

Once in America, it soon resumed its pristine splendor, its feeble body was invigorated, all the ills it had acquired during its long years of exile were cured, and again its face beams with the roseate color of health, and from its head all the lines of sorrow have vanished. It put away its mourning weeds, and it laughs and lives again. No longer does it play for the dances of the village youths and maidens, but, admired by disciples of the divine art, prized and beloved and borne on the wings of song, its tones now resound in the temples of art, and give utterance to the creations of master-souls. Who can fathom its heart-throbs when the inspired artist presses its form to his heart, and what fate awaits it when another century shall have passed !

My peculiar methods of hunting up these old traps, and the extraordinary energy I was obliged to exercise in their final discovery, and all of the other technicalities that finally brought these musical antiques into my possession, created much wonderment and great surprise among the aristocracy of Scheinfeld, and those of the powers that be who have some tint of preferred respectability. These gentry, while they have some pursuit in life which gives them such nourishment as is equally good for the goose and the

gander, have no incumbrance resting upon their minds which is created by the almighty dollar. They know their places and understand the dividing line that is drawn in the beer-stube of "Das Weisse Ross," where they assemble every evening for the very democratic custom of drinking beer, gossiping, and smoking their long pipes, undisturbed by family cares. It is therefore proper for me to state that the beer-stube at the grand hotel of "Das Weisse Ross" is divided into two sections, the inner room reserved for the preferred stock, while the outer one belongs to the rank and file exclusively. I must also say that I secured the services of a teamster who, with his lumbering wagon and docile pair of horses, served me as a means of locomotion to the little hamlets and farmhouses which cluster around Scheinfeld, and which have served as the abode of the art treasures of a past age.

This man, aside from his horses and wagon, also furnished me with intelligent information which opened the doors of the houses containing these hidden gems which appealed so strongly to my curiosity, and served me in my investigations. His name is Schlafhäuser. Like myself, he is an offspring of Scheinfeld, as were his father, his grandfather,—and even the horses,—and all those who have a drop of Schlafhäuser blood in their veins; and as for his patriotism and love for his beloved birthplace, I think that, without doing him an injustice, I can truthfully say that he has never stepped out of the district since his natal day. Be that as it may, Schlafhäuser knew one thing, and that was every village, every inhabitant, and every



SCHLAFHÄUSER AND HIS HORSES.



*Wirthshaus* within a radius of twenty miles, and that is certainly saying a good deal for Schlafhäuser; and while he loved his birthplace to distraction he showed an equal affection for his horses, as far as their treatment was concerned and the work he exacted from them.

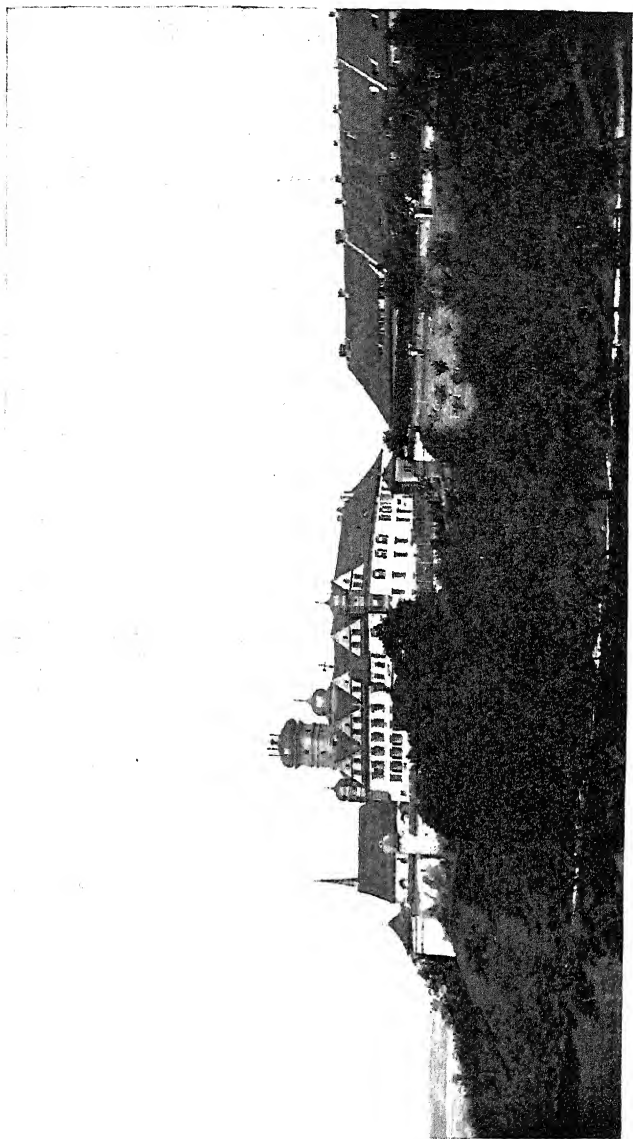
Every morning at seven o'clock he stood with his team in front of "Das Weisse Ross," ready to start for the country. The soft breezes from the castle of Schwarzenberg were mingled with the sacredness of the winds which were wafted over our heads from the monastery, and when we listened to the solemn and religious tones of the old organ which were borne to us from the village church, when the three bells, which differed in pitch, gave with their metallic voices the signal for the devout to assemble for early mass, and we heard the tiny tinkling bell of the sacristan intoning the solemn response of the "Agnus Dei," Schlafhäuser reverently crossed himself in sympathy with the momentary service—while he looked dolefully at his horses. I am afraid that I was not as much interested in the service as my driver, but what I lacked in religious fervor I made up for in anticipation and hope for a good day's clavier hunt. Schlafhäuser's devotions over, he mounted the wagon, and with a crack of the whip we started down the village street towards the neighboring country.

While I was meditating upon the slow gait of the horses, and not aware that my driver meant to interrupt my train of thought so soon, for we had been on the road scarcely half an hour, his intelligent beasts pulled up in front of a *Wirthshaus* in a little hamlet,

obediently halted before the customary manger, and stuck their noses right down into it as if expecting to find something to eat. Schlafhäuser jumped down from his seat, and without a word took out a bag of oats, which he emptied into the manger. Then as a bit of dessert he drew out a large loaf of bread, and with his knife cut it into small pieces and mixed it with the oats and salt. The sympathy of Schlafhäuser for his horses greatly impressed me, and I remained in silent meditation upon my seat, which performance must have been a surprise to Schlafhäuser, for he immediately accosted me, saying: "Don't you want to get down from the wagon, Herr Steinert, and refresh yourself with a glass of wine or beer? You look tired after your long ride, and as it usually takes my horses an hour or more to feed, you had better not sit out here, but come into the *Wirthshaus* and have some beer, for, I assure you, it is the best beer to be found anywhere. As I never pass this little inn without giving my horses a rest, and drinking a few steins of beer, I am confident you will feel much better if you follow my example." The inducements were so gracefully offered that I have never thought Schlafhäuser on the wrong track, for the opportunity of being in the *Wirthshaus*, and the great curiosity and inquisitiveness of the *Wirth* soon paved the way for Schlafhäuser to make known our business, and in response we received such information as we were looking for, and which was of great value to us in our search.

After spending a few hours successfully or otherwise, we drove for another half-hour, and upon





CASTLE SCHWARZENBERG.



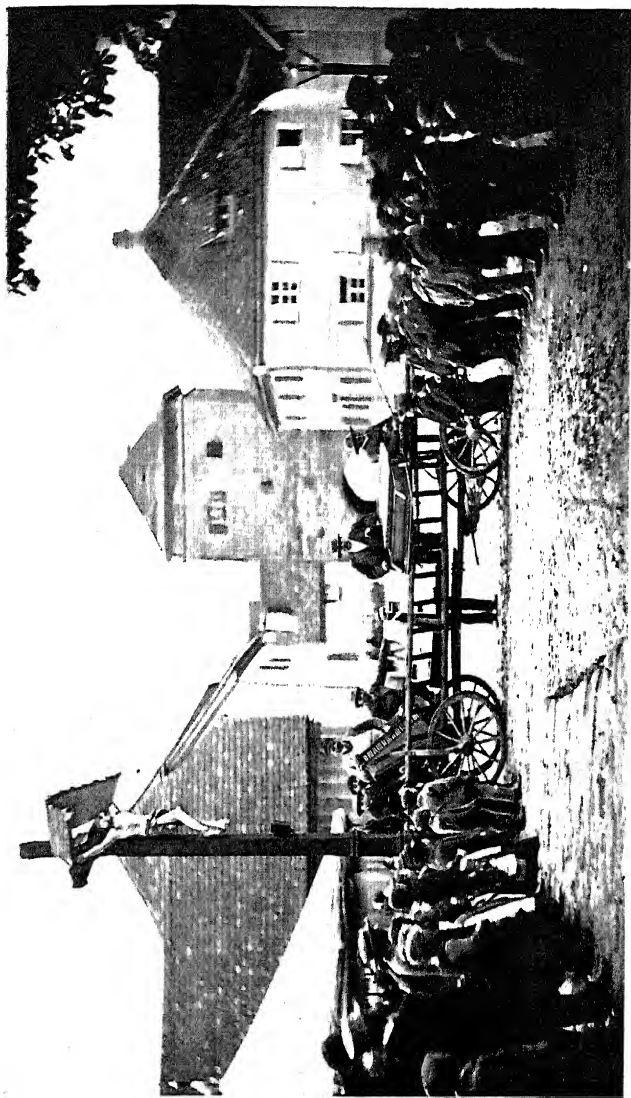
reaching the next village the horses showed the same sagacity in finding their manger, and were quite ready for another mouthful of oats, with bread on the side. By this time my companion had me fully initiated in his mode of travel, and when we had reached three, four, and five stopping-places and gone through the same tactics, I understood my position as well as the horses. There was much virtue in this slow and peculiar method of travel, because it gave us plenty of time to enter the houses of the peasants, and if, by chance, we skipped the very house we were looking for, the event of our coming was such a novel and unusual one that the villagers would come to us and call our attention to their possessions. As evening approached we returned to the metropolis of Scheinfeld, entering the village as the sun sank behind the wooded hill of Schwarzenberg. Halting before "Das Weisse Ross" to deposit our load of dilapidated old instruments, we were immediately surrounded by young and old, and looked upon with as much curiosity as circus clowns, while upon every face I could trace an accompanying look of suspicion which I delighted to see.

After supper when the aristocracy congregated in their part of the stube at the "Ross," and Schlafhäuser appeared in the other room, ready to repeat the day's doings over his stein of beer, the gentry, through the open door, would ply him with questions, which he was quite willing to answer, viz., what was I going to do with the old instruments for which I had paid so much money? expressing some doubt as to my sanity because I not only frittered

away my time but my money as well. On this subject Schlafhäuser was very loquacious, and as he was materially interested in my enterprise,—for I gave him ten marks a day for himself and his team, and a *Trinkgeld*, besides paying for the oats and bread for the horses, and the cigars, beer, and food for their master,—he was not at all slow in endorsing my extreme liberality, adding, at the same time, that I was all right except when I found an old clavier; then he had noticed that I labored under great excitement and, in consequence, paid fabulous prices for the traps. In this statement the gentry did n't disagree with him, though they, one and all, decided that I was a sensible fellow in all other respects.

Having now gathered together quite a number of old instruments of all kinds from that section of the country around Scheinfeld, I visited other parts of Germany in search of old clavichords, harpsichords, and early hammer claviers, until I had quite a respectable collection. My next step was to ship them to America, to study their peculiar construction, repair them, and learn how to play them. This was a great undertaking on my part, and it took me several years to put them into proper order and play them intelligently.

Finally, having them in good condition, I engaged the services of Mr. Krehbiel, the eminent musical critic of the New York *Tribune*, a gentleman who is profoundly interested in the study of the evolution of the pianoforte, and with him I began a lecture tour. While I played the old keyed instruments, playing Bach and the school which is in

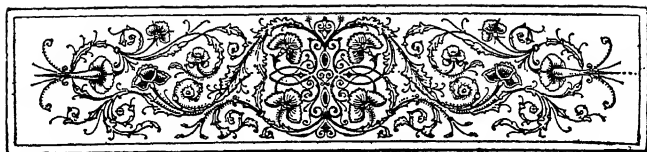


RETURN FROM OLAVIER HUNT.



keeping with their mechanical construction, also improvising upon them, Mr. Krehbiel lectured, and my two sons, Henry and Albert, assisted me in rendering chamber music upon the violin and viola. These lectures were given gratuitously at Yale, Harvard, Brown, Smith, Vassar, Andover, Professor Lambert's School of Music in New York City, Springfield, and Music Hall, Boston. I also secured Mr. Arthur Friedheim, the pianist, who played upon the modern pianoforte, in contrast to the old school and old instruments of my collection. My object in doing this was: first, to let the people hear not only the tone of the old instruments, but how the compositions of the eighteenth century sounded when played upon the instruments for which they were originally written; secondly, to compare their tone-coloring with the instrument called the pianoforte of the present day. I wanted to know the taste of the people, to have their unbiassed judgment as to the special tone-color which is to be found in the old instruments, to confirm my own opinion, and to have it endorsed by the public, so as to encourage and assist me in my undertaking to construct a modern instrument that should contain the very elements of the old, and one that would do away with the present pianoforte. This I had a perfect right to do, as I gave my services, while I paid all of the expenses connected with the trip.





## CHAPTER XI

Vienna—Finding of Hass Harpsichord—Purchase of Ruckers's Double Spinnet—Chicago World's Fair—Sharon Springs—Lecture in Springfield, Massachusetts

I MUST have obtained some recognition from the public at large for my work in collecting old instruments, and as the child was obliged to have a name, the world called it the "M. Steinert Collection." About this time I received a letter from the Smithsonian Institution of Washington, D. C., requesting me to send them a part of my collection for exhibition there, which I most cheerfully did. I also received an invitation from Princess Pauline von Metternich to lend my assistance to the great Exhibition of Music and Drama to be held in Vienna in 1892. After thinking the matter over, and realizing the opportunity which I would have to see all of the great collections of musical instruments and manuscripts the world over, as well as the very early development of the drama and the stage, the conglomeration of everything stored away in the public museums, and in private collections of the civilized and cultured countries of Europe, representing the different stages of music, drama, and art from



Wien den 8<sup>ten</sup>  
Februar 1842

Gnädiger Herr  
Director General  
Herrn v. Metternich  
Ich habe die Ehre  
Ihre hochw.  
Aufmerksamkeit zu eruchen.  
Meine ganz beständige  
Bewehrung u. Verehrung  
hochachtungsvoll

Wenn sie das  
Wort versteht  
Vergleichen die  
sich in einem Tag  
gelesen in. so werden  
auch sie sich ge-  
genen.  
Nur die Helling  
Vergleichen gelesene

zu werden u. ist die  
Friedens- und  
Friede sein  
unverwundlich.  
Liefen die  
Friede sein, die  
unverwundlich  
unverwundlich.

Friedens- und



their earliest beginning to the present day, I determined to add the little I possessed, and I therefore accepted the invitation of the art-loving Princess. Selecting the most beautiful and rare specimens of my already large collection I shipped them to Vienna, having previously put them in playable condition, so that I could use the instruments to illustrate my lectures and the musical performances which it was my object to deliver there.

I therefore determined to go to Vienna for the furtherance of this object. I must confess that I felt some anxiety in thus sending my instruments and entering them into competition with such collections as were represented by the treasures of Frederick the Great, those belonging to the Royal Families of Great Britain and Italy, the celebrated Dé Witt collection of Leipsic, that of Baron von Rothschild, and especially that of the Emperor of Austria and of the Gesellschaft der Musik Freunde of Vienna; not mentioning such treasures as were sent from France, the different States of Germany, and the rare specimens of private individuals who owned instruments that were used by the Bach family, Haydn, Mozart, Hummel, Beethoven, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Meyerbeer, Donizetti, Bellini, and many others. When I arrived at the Rotunda where the exhibition was held, and looked at all of the wonderful instruments, I felt that I was a stranger in a strange land, and I wished myself back in the quiet "City of Elms," where I could fondle and caress my darlings alone and undisturbed by the great agencies of artistic Europe; where I could obtain for them such appreciation and

praise as had taught me to be almost conceited and a person of much vanity.

At this moment, when I felt an intense longing for home, the sweet fairy who has ever watched over me came to console me, and in her immaculate loveliness stood before me. With her magic wand she pointed to my collection and whispered words of hope and cheer, telling me not to be cast down, for by my coming untold treasures and happiness would come to me. With a start I awoke from my depression, for I well knew that the fairy appeared only when I needed her most, and that her coming was the signal for rejoicing, for good fortune must be hovering over me. I started on a tour of inspection round the building, and approached the famous collection of Frederick the Great, the Musical King, and lo! I found that he was only a flute-player after all. I touched the keys of his *Reise-clavier*, so called because it can be folded up and put into a trunk when travelling, and when I tried to call up the departed soul of its former tone life, alas! it was as silent as the grave, and while its keys bent down to the touch of my fingers the hammers that should have evoked the living spirit from out the strings were not responsive, their usefulness was gone. Yes, "empty was the cradle, baby's gone." I soon discovered that I was surrounded by the inhabitants of an old-time museum, and that the instruments assembled in the Rotunda on the Prater were nothing but old, broken-down wrecks minus the power of speech to tell of their former existence and usefulness, while the "M. Steinert Collection" was alive and capable of being played upon.

This minority which I represented created for me a prestige which afterwards brought me honors and great pleasure, and I thanked my good fairy, and kissed her outstretched wand on the Prater of Vienna. With this playable collection I gave daily lectures on the "Evolution of the Pianoforte," in my little section of the Rotunda, improvising upon them and playing from the old masters. One day a committee came and extended to me an invitation from the Conservatory of Music and Der Gesellschaft der Musik Freunde, to deliver a lecture before the faculty and advanced pupils of the Conservatory, which invitation I accepted.

Here I must recall an incident of my stay in Brussels. While in the city I paid a visit to the Conservatoire, where I saw a magnificent collection of old instruments, and among them a wonderful harpsichord, made by J. A. Hass of Hamburg, about 1715. This instrument was of tremendous size, and it had two keyboards. I was so impressed by its size and beauty that I involuntarily touched it, and in doing so called forth the displeasure of the custodian, who told me that no one was allowed to handle the instrument on account of the damage that might be done to it by playing upon it; that it was of such great antiquity and magnificence of musical power that to touch it was looked upon as sacrilege. He strengthened his remarks by saying, "It is the only harpsichord of like size, construction, and make now in existence." The beauty of the instrument and the rare qualities as described by the custodian created a desire within me to possess the harpsichord, and if I had followed

my inclination, I don't know what fabulous price I would have paid for its possession.

But to resume. On the afternoon of my promised lecture before the Vienna Conservatory of Music, while busily engaged in tuning an old harpsichord for use that evening, I noticed an elderly gentleman approaching me, with a smile upon his face and a look of interest in his eyes. He stopped at the section and gazed some moments at the harpsichord I was at work upon, finally breaking the silence by introducing himself and telling me that he was a piano-tuner by trade. As I wanted to have a little fun with him, I asked him whether he ever tuned such a pianoforte, pointing to the harpsichord. With much sarcasm he replied that he had never tuned such a pianoforte, but that he had seen and repaired, twenty-five years before, a harpsichord, and that it was much larger and handsomer than the one I was at work upon; that it was a double-bank instrument, beautifully decorated; that it had a number of registers like an organ, and its tones were marvellously powerful yet sweet, and that it was far superior to any pianoforte he had ever heard.

His description made a powerful impression upon the man from the Nutmeg State, and in a phlegmatic and deliberate manner I asked him whether I could see the harpsichord and possibly buy it. He began to laugh and show great surprise, saying that it was impossible, as he had lost all track of the instrument, and though he still remembered the name of the owner and where he then lived, he was certain that the harpsichord was no longer in his possession. I was not to be put

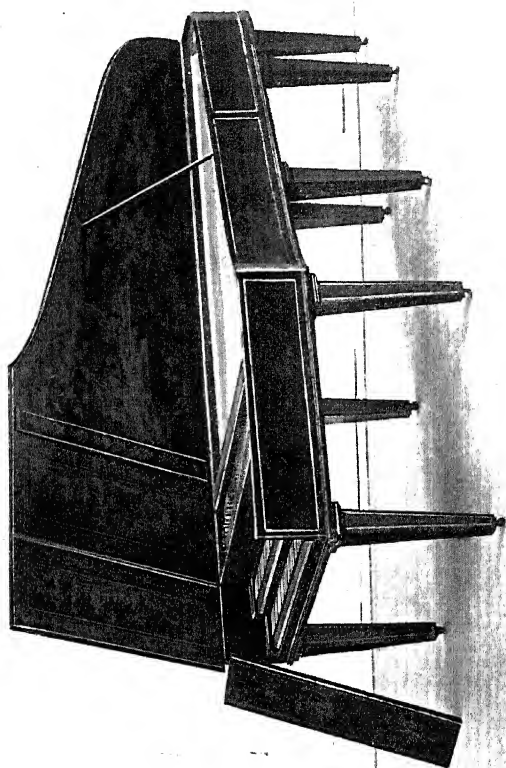


off, for the old tuner's description had excited my curiosity, and a great longing came over me to see it. I therefore expressed my desire to the tuner and implored him to lead me in the direction of the instrument, so that I might obtain some clue as to its whereabouts. It was of no avail, however, as he looked upon the spending of further time as a mistake, and useless. His protests had no effect upon me; rather did they strengthen me in my endeavor to find out if possible the resting-place of the harpsichord, so I said, "Herr Müller, I will pay you ten gulden if you will put me on the track of this old instrument." I followed this offer with an invitation to take a glass of beer, and at the same time I took out my cigar-case and offered him a cigar. Over our stein of cool Vienna beer his memory was refreshed, and he signified his willingness to do his best to find it. After two or three steins he rubbed his head thoughtfully and, putting on his Vienna thinking-cap, said, "*Ach, Herr von Steinert, es ist ja der Herr Diehn für den Ich das alte clavicymbal repariert habe, er wohnt ja in der—Strasse.*" We took a cab and quickly drove to the house of Herr Diehn.

We halted before a large old-fashioned mansion, and alighting I pulled the bell-rope hanging down in front of the door. I rang several times before any one appeared. Finally the door was opened by a venerable, gray-haired gentleman who, with charming courtesy, asked what he could do for us. My guide must have recognized him at once, for in the most affable and polite way he said, "*Ach, Herr Diehn, hier ist ein Amerikaner der möchte das alte clavicymbal sehen, das Ich für Sie*

*repariert habe, und er will es auch kaufen."* Herr Diehn was dumfounded at this announcement, for to judge by his expression he thought that there was not a man in the world who could be induced to buy it, so he replied: "My good friends, while I think the old spinet must be stored away somewhere, I have not the faintest idea where it is, and you must know that to find it in this large house would be quite a task, as I have neither seen nor heard of it in nearly twenty-five years. If I am so fortunate as to find it, I am confident that its usefulness is so far gone as not to be worth the trouble of hunting it up." He furthermore said that he was old and in too feeble health to mount the stairs to the attic under the roof where the old clavier might possibly be found. Herr Diehn strongly opposed our urgent request to be shown the way to the attic where the old trap was stored away, but after a long parley and my assurance that I would buy the instrument under any condition, he rubbed his head a moment and then called, "Katrina! Katrina! Bring me a candle and come up here with me," and he pointed to the stairs leading to the attic as Katrina appeared holding a lighted tallow candle in her hand.

With Katrina ahead, we felt our way up the dark stairs to the space under the roof, which was so low on the sides as to make us bend over nearly double. Feeling our way along under the eaves, we finally came to an object which seemed to be long and made of wood. It was lying on the floor on its side. Herr Diehn put his hand upon it and drawing it out a little with our help, said, "I guess this is the old



HASS HARPSICHORD.



harpsichord you are looking for." It was covered with dirt and dust, but we pulled it out to the middle of the attic where there were two empty flour barrels. We then bent down and tried to lift it up on to the barrels, but, as it was very heavy, we needed Katrina's assistance also, and sticking her candle in a hole in one of the rafters she came and helped us raise the old instrument to the barrels; and the inside, though covered with dirt and dust, was visible, the cover being in another part of the room.

Taking the candle, I looked at the harpsichord before me, and with my handkerchief dusted off the sounding-board that I might see the construction of the instrument, and as the flickering light fell upon it, to my intense delight I saw that it was indeed a magnificent harpsichord, bearing on the sounding-board the name of J. A. Hass of Hamburg, with the date of 1710. It had two keyboards, with tortoise-shell naturals and ivory sharps, eight stops, and it contained a long set of strings producing a sixteen-foot tone, also two shorter sets, each set producing an eight-foot tone, and a still shorter one of a four-foot tone, and, finally, two very short sets, each giving a two-foot tone. Furthermore, one stop imitated the lute and another one the harp. The sounding-board was painted with flowers and other artistic decorations, while the inside lid displayed the most excellent specimens of Japanese art, both in conception and execution. The builder was noted as the most celebrated harpsichord-maker of that period in Germany. It was the genuine counterpart of the harpsichord, also made by Hass of Hamburg, which I had looked upon with so much

envy in the Conservatoire of the Belgian Capital, and which almost set me crazy, so great was my desire to possess it at any cost. Here before me was an instrument that was even more beautiful and of an earlier date. To describe my sensations and my excitement at the moment when I found the rare treasure in the old garret of Herr Diehn in Vienna is impossible; and when I recalled that important epoch in the history of music when Handel and Mattheson lived in Hamburg, when Bach gave life to his immortal works upon this instrument which had now come into my possession, I felt that my journey to Vienna had been a most important and fruitful one.

It did not take me long to pay for the harpsichord and remove it from its unhallowed home, and I shipped it at once to my workshop in New Haven, Connecticut. When I returned I repaired it thoroughly, and have used it in my lectures ever since. It is of a beautiful tone, powerful and rich, and yet soft and more expressive than are most harpsichords, and it never fails to delight my hearers when I play upon it.

The evening following the finding of the harpsichord I lectured before the Conservatory, and it was most successful, the Vice-President at the close of the talk making an address in which he thanked me for my services, and spoke of the pleasure and intellectual treat afforded by my comprehensive lecture on the "Evolution of the Pianoforte." I replied, thanking them for their appreciation, and presented them with a clavichord, with the proviso that the instrument should be used once a year at





THE SCIENTIFIC COMMISSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF MUSIC AND THE DRAMA IN VIENNA, 1892.

Bildhauer Costenoble.	Custos Dr. Böckh.	Henry Regnier	Vice-Präsident Baron Bourgoing.	Präsident Excellenz Alexander Markgraf von Pallavicini	Exce. Boos Vice- C ospt.	12 Graf aldeck isident.	Präsident Abg. Dr. Jacques.	Ober-Baurath Baron Hasenauer.	Director Philip Bock (St. Petersburg).	Docent Dr. Osc. Fleischer (Berlin).	Morris Steinert (New Haven, U. S. A.).
Chef-Architekt Bartelmus.	Dr. Thouret (Berlin).	Commissaire de la Repub- lique française (Paris).	Custos Dr. Engelmann.	Angelo Baron Eisenhof.	Dr. Baron Scotti (Bergamo).	Dr. A. W.	Dr. Baron Weckbecker k. k. Regier- ungs-Com- missär.	Custos Dr. Barack (Strassburg).	Custos Dr. Heinrich Rietsch.	Eugène Thomas (Amsterdam).	Director kais. Rath Oscar Hoeft.
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	Chef-Architekt Oskar Marmorek.	Dr. von Weilen.			Dr. G.	Dr. A. W.	Director Dr. Carl Glossy.	Don Roca (Barcelona).	Commissär von Wedelstaedt (Berlin).	Ingenieur A. Hoffmann.	





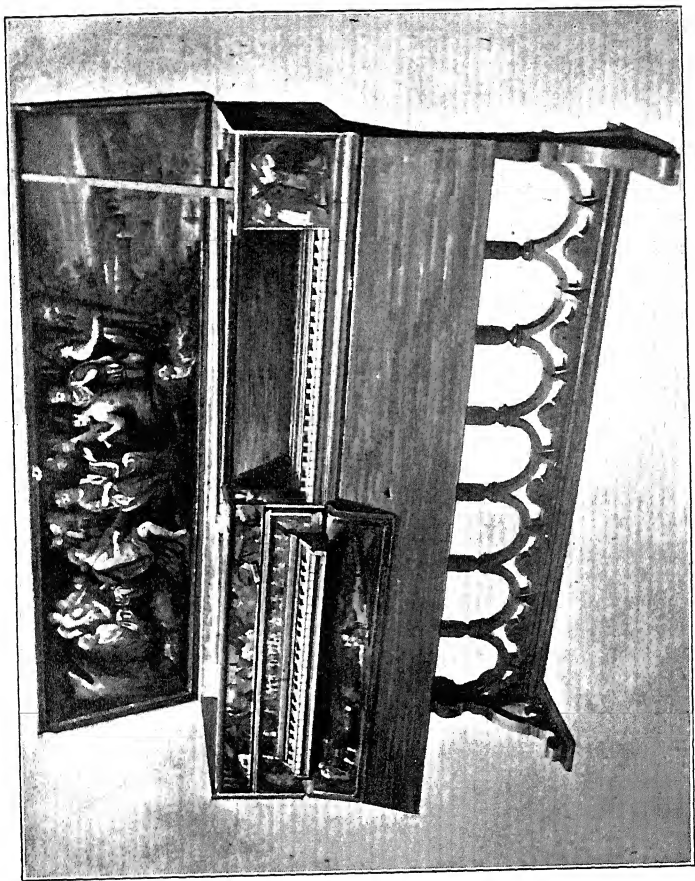
the public recital of the Conservatory. The lecture over, I was invited by the faculty to a banquet at the restaurant "Kühler" on the Schottenring, and while there I related to them the finding of the Hass harpsichord in the city that afternoon. They could not believe it, but when I assured them and proved it to them and told them that the old tuner of the Conservatory, Herr Müller, had led me to it, their sorrow and disappointment knew no bounds.

While in Vienna the Commissioner from America to Great Britain, Mr. McCormick of Chicago, came to visit the exhibition and to solicit musical loan collections for the "World's Fair" to be held in Chicago in 1893. He called on Geheimrath (Doctor) von Ausspitzer, and told him his object in coming to Vienna, and Doctor von Ausspitzer informed him that the man who had the most interesting collection was an American, Mr. Steinert, of New Haven, Connecticut, and he advised him to see me. Mr. McCormick, who lived in the same hotel, paid me a visit and solicited my co-operation. While I did not promise to send my collection, for I felt that I had been a showman quite long enough, I left the question open, and as he was not finally successful he left. Upon my return to the United States I entered into correspondence with Doctor Peabody, and we arranged upon satisfactory terms for my loan collection to be shown in Chicago. I received two thousand dollars for my services, which amount did not cover one half of the expense in taking my collection there.

I also found in Vienna, in the Great Britain exhibit, a most wonderful double spinet, which

belonged to a gentleman in London, and which I purchased from him and placed in my collection. This spinet was made by Hans Ruckers, the elder, in Antwerp as early as 1579, and Ruckers's spinets were celebrated as being of the finest quality. The little spinet at the left of the instrument sets into the spinet proper and is tuned one octave higher than the one whose keyboard is placed to the right. In performing on both instruments at the same time, the smaller one is removed and can be set upon a table. The paintings upon the lid are especially fine, representing a contest before the gods between Apollo and Marsyas, the former playing a viola, the latter a pipe, while the background is a hilly country, with a lake and a castle. Above and below the removable spinet are charming landscapes, with figures of children dancing, and at the fixed keyboard men and women are dancing in pairs. The spinet rests upon a stand with seven pierced arches and columns, and with the exception of one at Nuremberg, made by Martin Beest, it is probably the only complete double spinet in existence.

One day I received a call from Sir George Grove, the editor of *Grove's Dictionary of Music*, and Director of the Royal College of Music in London, for whom I improvised upon the old instruments. He extended to me an urgent invitation to lecture at the college, and I accepted, but was prevented from doing so by Mr. Grove's inability to procure suitable instruments in London to illustrate the lecture. I could not take my collection there from Vienna on account of a special arrangement



DOUBLE SPINET MADE BY HANS RUCKERS THE ELDER.



made with the Government of the United States which admitted the instruments free of duty, provided they were sent to Vienna and returned over the same route. During my stay in London I formed the acquaintance of Mr. J. S. Hipkins, the noted writer on musical subjects, and a contributor to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, a well-known lecturer and authority on musical instruments, whose acquaintance I highly prize, and in whose home and charming family circle I spent many pleasant hours.

My collection created a great deal of interest in Chicago, and while there I gave a lecture in the large Auditorium on the Fair Grounds by request of the management. Upon my return to New Haven I was asked to give a lecture at Yale University in North Sheffield Hall, which I did, lecturing and playing myself. This invitation from Yale was followed by requests from the Metropolitan Museum in New York, from Columbia University, and I also gave an informal talk one afternoon in the studio of Mr. Breese, and before the Monday Morning Club, under the management of Mr. Bagby, at the Waldorf-Astoria.

After returning from Vienna, I found myself in need of the baths at Sharon Springs of which I had been deprived the summer before. It has ever been a custom of mine to carry some musical instrument with me when going away for a few weeks, and as I was at that time greatly interested in playing the clavichord I took one with me that year to Sharon.

In the monotony that so powerfully surrounds the health-seeking patients, the existence of such a curious little instrument as a clavichord, though

it is exceedingly modest in its tone splendor, could not be kept a secret, and while I knew that its soft and tender whisperings could scarcely penetrate through the door which separated me from my neighbor, it is nevertheless true that it was noised about the Pavilion Hotel, where I was staying, that a queer little man in No. 103 had a quaint instrument, and that weird sounds were nightly heard in his room; that these tones were not unlike the æolian harp, and yet they seemed to be brought out by a skilful hand, and had, therefore, much resemblance to music that is produced on other instruments. The wonderment of the lonely guests was on tip toe, and those living on the same floor where the mysterious sounds were heard finally appealed to the chambermaids for information. These girls must have satisfied their inquisitiveness concerning the playing of music upon a little instrument that looked for all the world like an ordinary kitchen table, but which contained keys which brought forth strange sounds such as they had never heard before.

Having thus created a peculiar kind of sensation, which had much curiosity connected with it, and which was entirely unknown to me, I was accosted one day by Professor T. of Harvard University, with a polite request to give him some information regarding the music and the instrument which he nightly heard when in his room. He followed his request by telling me that his wife, who thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed the class of music I played, wished to know something about the instrument. The Professor showed so much interest that I invited him into my room, and showing him my old

clavichord I played for him and briefly explained to him its history. He must have been greatly pleased with what he heard, and as he and his wife were in the company of relatives of the President of Harvard University, and as they asked me to allow them to come in and see the clavichord and listen to an explanation as to its peculiar construction, and as many similar requests were made to me, I finally consented to give a short talk every morning in my room on the "Evolution of the Pianoforte," and to play from the old masters and improvise. This seemed a pleasant diversion, and every morning my room was filled with ladies and gentlemen.

Among the listeners was a prominent society woman from Springfield, Massachusetts. She was greatly interested in my work, and she suggested that I come to Springfield during the winter, and give a lecture there. She asked me my terms, and when I told her that I was not in the business, and that I invariably made no charge, she was delighted, and called my attention to the existence of a charity in the city which was greatly in need of funds, and proposed that tickets be sold for the lecture and the proceeds given to this charity, to which arrangement I consented.

It was a bitter cold day when I arrived in Springfield to deliver my well-worn lecture on the "Evolution of the Pianoforte." When I reached the little city, accompanied by my son Albert, who, by the way, had been my travelling companion during my previous visit to Vienna, I philosophized with him as we walked up Main Street upon the fact that it must be a very cold day for me when I had to come to



Springfield to lecture for charity. As the prospect for a large gathering gave me an icy chill, and I was fairly shivering in my boots, I saw, like an oasis in the desert, a florist's shop and a window quite full of beautiful flowers, blooming in contrast to the spring flowers of the *Mikado*. As I am fond of flowers, and thinking of what might happen that night when I was to inflict upon the intelligent people of Springfield my threadbare lecture on the "Evolution of the Pianoforte," I said, "Albert, go in there and buy some flowers for the lecturer." While Albert is generally a good son, I was astonished to see him show signs of disobedience, and he turned and looked at me in a surprised way, as he replied, "What do you mean, father?—buy flowers for the lecturer?"—"What I say, my son. Go in there and buy some flowers for the lecturer," and, handing him a five-dollar bill, I emphasized my command by telling him that I wanted a bouquet of the nicest flowers to be had, and that I wanted him to pay five dollars for it. Albert reluctantly complied with my request, and presently came out with an exquisite bouquet of flowers, and we left for the hotel. "Now, my boy," I continued, "at the end of my lecture when I make my closing remark which you know so well,—'Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you greatly for the kind attention you have shown me this evening,'—and which, as you know, Albert, is always followed by a polite bow, you must come forward and present me with the flowers." We rehearsed this several times at the hotel, and Albert finally did the thing very gracefully.

I must credit the good people of Springfield with much charity when I say that, despite the bitter cold night, a large and appreciative audience gathered for my lecture on the "Evolution of the Pianoforte," and I must also credit myself with my foresight as to not being greeted with flowers from them. During the lecture I kept my eye on Albert, who was wide awake to the occasion of presenting the flowers to me, but as I continued and tried to hold the interest of my audience I noticed with disappointment that Albert had fallen asleep,—for which I could not blame him, knowing that he had heard my lecture on the "Evolution of the Pianoforte" so many times as to prefer a little doze to what I had to say. Albert did not know that he snored when asleep, otherwise he would have had better taste than to fall asleep when I was delivering my lecture on the "Evolution of the Pianoforte," and so to my dismay I heard the unmusical sound of Albert's snores which were even more overpowering in their peculiar rhythms than the soft and dulcet tones of my old clavichords upon which I always play when I deliver my lecture on the "Evolution of the Pianoforte."

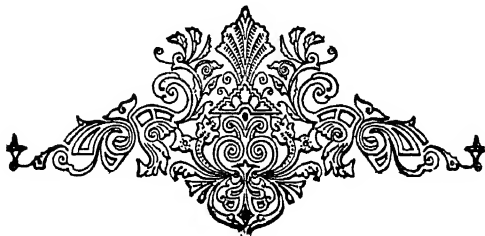
The cold and icy winds that were howling outside now began in their force to make the windows rattle amidst the spellbound interest of the audience and the unmusical snores of Albert, the guardian of my five-dollar bouquet. I drew near the closing sentence of the imposing *finale* of my celebrated lecture on the "Evolution of the Pianoforte," and as I uttered the last word, I cast an agonized glance at Albert, but he was still in the arms of

Morpheus, dreaming to a snoring obligato. Remembering the bouquet for which I had paid five dollars and the possibility of its not appearing in accordance to our rehearsal, I cried out in my despair, "Albert! Albert! Where are the flowers for the lecturer?" The boy, hearing in his dreams the voice of his father, and realizing the hour of my need, sprang to his feet, and in the most obedient and devoted manner advanced with the bouquet, which I graciously accepted, thanking Albert, and bowing right and left to the tumultuous audience in appreciation of their generosity.

Referring to my early struggles in forming an orchestra, and especially to the collapse of my band on Fischer's birthday at the temperance lecture in Music Hall, it may not be amiss to speak of the survivors of that glorious band which aimed so high and fell so low. It would be an injustice to them—of which I count myself one of the happy mortals—to refer to the fact that old Adam still had a little hold upon the few, when one fine morning a body of musicians came to me and implored me to organize an orchestra. This word, in itself, carried me back like a flash to the Fischer episode, and in a hopeless way I told the applicants of my former experiences. The committee that asked for my co-operation in bringing into life a new orchestra in New Haven appeared to me to be in earnest, and this encouraged me to once more indulge in one of my old passions, and the result was the organization, some six years ago, of the "New Haven Symphony Orchestra," a body of sixty musicians, who have given a series of concerts of the highest order once

a year in the Hyperion Theatre. Among this band, I am proud to state, are two of my children, Heloise (Mrs. S. B. Shoninger), who has the honor to be the second concertmeister, and Rudolph, who plays first oboe. This orchestra, which is bound to live and prosper, has given a great impulse to the musical culture of our city.

In connection with this band, it would be an injustice not to mention the name of a man who furnishes New Haven with all that smacks of drama and music. And while I don't care to write his biography, as it might outshine and put into the shade my own, I consider it pertinent to refer to Mr. G. B. Bunnell as a proper person to be mentioned in my reminiscences. And though his early training came under the tutelage of P. T. Barnum, where he probably received his first instruction in music, and as the Barnum school may be much in advance of the Wagner, his usefulness has not been antagonistic, although I owe him much for his interest in my work.





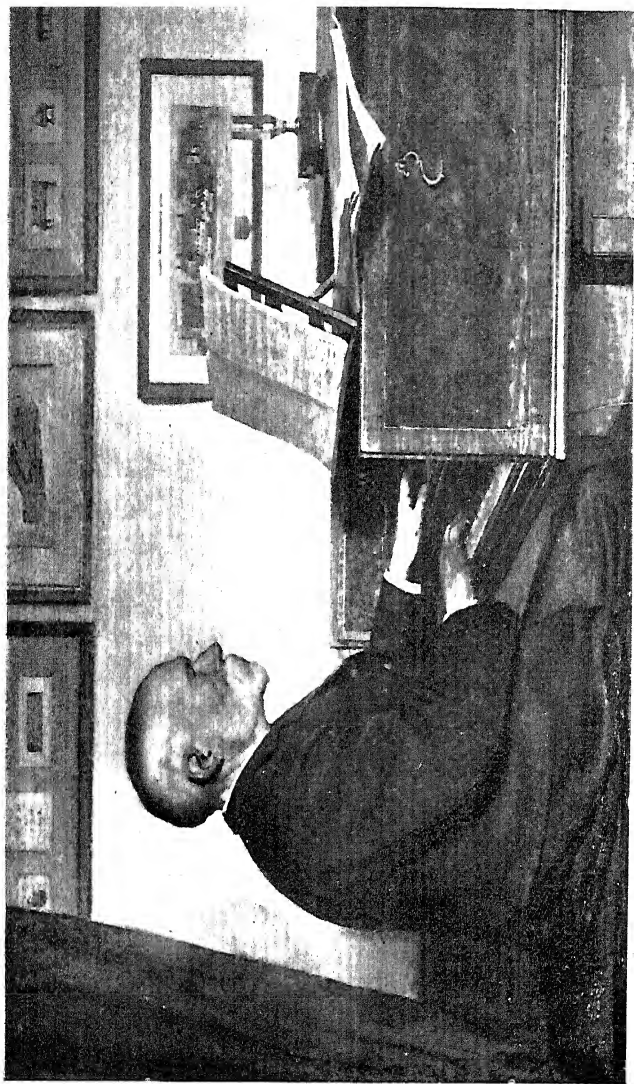
## CHAPTER XII

### Brief History of the Pianoforte

ANY one not acquainted with the history of the pianoforte will probably be astonished to learn that at the time of the birth of such great composers as Domenico Scarlatti (1683), George Frederick Handel (1684), Johann Sebastian Bach (1685), and even a quarter of a century later, no such instrument as to-day we call a pianoforte was in existence. The greater part of the compositions of these masters were never written for the pianoforte; in fact, many years passed before these composers paid any attention to this instrument, as they seemed opposed to its use. The then existing instruments played by means of a keyboard were the clavichord, harpsichord, and spinet.

According to musical history, it is a well-known fact that in Italy, about the year 1527, celebrated musicians were living who composed for keyed instruments, and could also play upon them, such as Adrian Willaert, Parabosco, Zarlino, and a number of others.

In 1550 England had composers and players upon keyed instruments, of whom the most noted were



A. J. HIPKINS AT THE HARPSICHORD.



Thomas Tallis and his pupils, William Bird, the latter being a clavicinist in the service of Queen Elizabeth. These men are known as the authors of a number of manuscript compositions, which are compiled and recognized as Queen Elizabeth's Virginal Book.

It is also a noteworthy fact, that during the middle of the seventeenth century, in France, the Couperin families and Louis Marchand were composers and excellent players upon the harpsichord.

Hans Leo Hasler, born in 1564 in Nuremberg, Christian Erbach, born about 1560 in Algesheim, Hieronymus Pr torius, of Hamburg, born in 1560, represent Germany during the end of the sixteenth century as fine composers and players upon these instruments. There were many others, but I shall here mention only Johann Jakob Froberger of Halle, born in 1635, Johann Kasper Kerl of Munich, born in 1628, Johann Pachelbel of Nuremberg, born in 1653, and Dietrich Buxtehude of L beck, born in 1637, until we come to Domenico Scarlatti, Rameau, Handel, and Bach.

The then prevailing style of music as found in the domain of the Church, with its polyphony and organ, largely influenced the secular style of music, but the solemnity of the organ tone, and the peculiar rhythm associated with it, called forth the desire for an instrument outside the church which, while having still an affinity with the organ, should possess elasticity of tone and variety of color. This instrument was the clavichord.

The clavichord was much in vogue in Italy



with the ladies, and it was the favorite instrument of young women. During the sixteenth century in Italy, it was the custom for people of wealth to send their daughters to the convents for the purpose of acquainting them with the arts and sciences, and especially to receive a musical education; and at the time of Adrian Willaert's labors in Venice, he himself and the organists at San Marco were likewise clavier teachers in such convents.

It was about 1529 that Elena, daughter of the renowned poet and man of letters, Pietro Bembo, begged her father to allow her to take part in this instruction. Bembo's written reply has been preserved for us, and the passage in his letter wherein he speaks of the fondness for clavier-playing, runs thus: "Touching thy request for leave to play the *monocordo*, I answer, that by reason of thy tender years thou canst not know that playing is an art for vain, frivolous (*leggiera*) women. And I would that thou shouldst be the most amiable and the most chaste and modest maiden alive. Besides, if thou wert to play badly, thy playing would cause thee little pleasure, and no little shame. But in order to play well, thou must needs give up ten or twelve years to this exercise, without even thinking of aught else. And how far this would benefit thee, thou canst see for thyself, without my telling it. Should thy schoolmates desire thee to learn to play for their pleasure, tell them that thou dost not care to have them laugh at thy mortification. And content thyself with the pursuit of the sciences and the practice of needlework."

The clavichord possessed a soft and sweet tone,

capable of expression, and its tone could be prolonged according to the pressure of the keys towards the strings. A small bit of brass, called a "tangent," was fastened to the back end of the key, which, when raised by pressing the key, struck the string, dividing it, thus producing at the same time tone and pitch. With a good touch the player could feel the elasticity of the string, and the more this was felt the better the instrument was considered to be.

By the pressure of the tangent the string was divided into two unequal lengths, each of which would have vibrated, but the shorter one was instantly damped by a narrow band of cloth interlaced with the strings, which also damped the longer section as soon as the player allowed the key to rise and the tangent to fall. The tangent thus not only produced the tones, but served as a bridge to measure off the vibrating lengths required for the pitch of the notes. Thus a delicate tone was obtained that had in it something charmingly hesitating and tremulous.

The tone of the clavichord, although very weak, was yet capable, unlike that of the harpsichord, of increase and decrease, reflecting the finest and most tender gradations of the touch of the player. In this power of expression it was without a rival until the piano was invented. Koch, in his musical lexicon, describes the clavichord as the comfort of the sufferer and the sympathizing friend of cheerfulness. The clavichord was a favorite instrument with Johann Sebastian Bach, who preferred it to the pianoforte. Mozart used the clavichord now in the

*Mozarteum* in composing his *Zauberflöte*, or *Magic Flute*, and other masterpieces. Beethoven is reported to have said, "Among all keyed instruments the clavichord is that on which one can best control tone and expressive interpretation."

Clavichords made prior to the last century had strings for the lower or natural keys only, the semitones on the upper keys being produced by tangents directed toward the strings of the lower. Thus, C sharp was obtained by striking the C string at a shorter length. About the year 1725, Daniel Faber of Crailsheim gave the semitone its own string, and instruments so made were distinguished as *Bundfrei* from the older *Gebunden*, which was a system of fretting. The *Bebung*, a quiver which consisted in giving to the key of the clavichord a certain trembling pressure which produced a kind of pulsation of the sound and which cannot be produced on the pianoforte, was much used by Bach in order to connect and enliven the notes, and when necessary to give them a special emphasis, to help in elucidating the character of the music, whether sad or cheerful.

The early history of the clavichord previous to the fifteenth century, together with that of the chromatic keyboard, rests in profound obscurity. Welker describes the oldest clavichord as bearing the date 1520, having four octaves, with the notes ~~G sharp and D sharp wanting~~. Clavichords had, even with the last improvements, a soft, hesitating tone. After they came into general use the idea arose of constructing an instrument whose strings could be set into stronger vibration by means of

more powerful tangents, in order to gain thereby a more powerful, more intense, tone. Of the many stringed instruments that could be used for this purpose during the Middle Ages, the psaltery was the most suitable one. Its strings were operated by means of a plectrum which was fastened by rings to the hand of the performer. The psaltery was the prototype of the spinet and the harpsichord. Musical writers of the year 1650 say that the psaltery played with a skilled hand stood second to no other instrument, and praise its silvery tone and its purity of intonation, so easily controlled by the fingers. The strings of this instrument were in sets of three, each group, as in the grand piano, being tuned in unison to make one note.

The spinet, a keyed instrument with plectra or jacks, was used in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. According to Dr. Burney, it was "a small harpsichord or virginal with one string to each note." Scaliger, who lived between 1484 and 1550, states that crow-quills were introduced into keyed instruments subsequent to his boyhood, and that through them the name "spinet" (from spine, a thorn or point) became applied to what had been known as the "clavicymbal" and "harpsichord." The strings of the spinet were set in vibration by points of a quill, elevated on wooden uprights known as jacks, and twitching or plucking them as the depression of the keys caused the points to pass upward. It is also stated by some writers that the spinet received its name from Spinetti, a Venetian, the inventor of the oblong form of the case, and not the inventor of the crow-quill points.

Spinetti adapted the plectrum system to the oblong or table-shaped clavichord. All instruments of the spinet or harpsichord family were on the plectrum principle, and therefore were incapable of dynamic modification of tone by difference of touch. The spinet or virginal was a favorite instrument of the kings and queens of England, and many interesting compositions have been written for it by both English and French composers.

The harpsichord, like the spinet, was on the plectrum principle. As pianofortes are made in three different shapes, the grand, the square, and the upright, there were as many varieties of the jack instruments, namely, the harpsichord of trapeze form, the oblong and pentangular form, called the spinet, or virginal, and the upright harpsichord, or clavictherium. The harpsichord was the most important keyed instrument used during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, and it served as an accompanying orchestral instrument in opera and oratorio. The compositions of Scarlatti were mostly written for the harpsichord, and even some of Bach's greatest works were composed for it.

The earliest mention of the harpsichord is under the name of clavicymbal, in the *Rules of the Minnesinger*, by Eberhard Cersne, A.D. 1404. With it occur the clavichord, the monochord, and other musical instruments in use at that time. Jean de Muris, writing in 1323, and enumerating musical instruments, makes no reference to either clavicymbal or clavichord, but describes the monochord as in use at that time for measuring intervals. Moreover, there was no music wire before this epoch, the

earliest record of wire-drawing being 1351 A.D., at Augsburg. The harpsichord, being in the grand-piano shape, unlike the spinet, had two, three, and sometimes four strings to a note, and generally with one string an octave higher in pitch, more rarely one an octave lower, called the *bourdon*. The spinet thus multiplied became the more powerful and important harpsichord. Double keyboards and stops for registers showed its affinity, at least in idea, to the organ. The harpsichord died out with the spinet and clavichord in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, unable to maintain the struggle for existence against the pianoforte. Perhaps the last harpsichord was one bearing Clementi's name, dated 1802, which was shown at the Bologna Exhibition. Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* was published in 1802 for harpsichord or pianoforte, and there is a record that Himmel played upon a harpsichord in public, at Berlin, as late as 1805. All the keyboard stringed instruments, whatever the size and however the sound may be produced, have certain structural peculiarities in common, and especially the apparatus for resonance. The barred (*querhols*, *balken*) sounding-board of cypress in the old Italian spinets, of spruce in the modern piano, all come under the same acoustic generalization of resonance as Strad-fiddles, Bologna lutes, Andalusian guitars.

At the close of the seventeenth century there did not exist any instrument, with the exception of the clavichord, on which the performer could at will produce a soft or loud tone by pressure exerted upon the keys of the keyboard. The desire of

some musicians of that period to combine the wonderful tone-sustaining capacities of the clavichord with the power of the harpsichord was shared by builders of musical instruments and eminent players. The dulcimer was the first instrument which gave an impulse in Germany to the invention of the pianoforte. The dulcimer, laid upon a table or frame, was struck by means of hammers, one side of which was covered with hard and the other with soft leather, in order to produce the forte and piano effects. The tone, harsh in loud playing, was always confused on account of the absence of any damping contrivance, which alone can prevent the continuance of sound when not required. Pantaleon Hebenstreit of Eisleben, became, about 1697, a virtuoso upon the dulcimer, which he quadrupled in dimensions and had constructed as a double *Hackbrett*, with two sounding-boards, each with its scale of wire strings on one side and covered catgut on the other side. With this powerful chromatic instrument, demanding herculean force to play, Hebenstreit travelled to Paris in 1705, where Louis XIV. christened it with his name, "Pantaleon." Kuhnau (in Mattheson's *Critica Musica*, December 8, 1717) praises the instrument and its superiority over clavichord and harpsichord in possessing the properties of piano and forte. It was this, according to Schröter's account, that led him to ponder over a keyed instrument to do the like.

In Germany, France, and Italy the celebrated organ-builder, Gottfried Silbermann, was formerly universally considered as the inventor of the piano until the organist, Christoph Gottlieb Schröter, ten

years after the death of Silbermann, in 1765, claimed the honor of said invention for himself, and attempted to furnish proofs for his claim by means of drawings and documents. Lately, however, extracts from Italian and French archives have been published which for the first time accurately reveal the part taken by Schröter and Silbermann in this invention. These communications, verified by the pianos of that time still in existence, necessitate a complete revolution of all previous histories of the piano. They are chiefly the results of a society in Florence which had resolved to have a celebration on March 7, 1874, in commemoration of Cristofori, the first, and without doubt independent, inventor of the clavicymbal with piano and forte. This instrument, known since 1711, was called by its inventor "pianoforte," which name it has retained ever since outside of Italy. Cristofori, according to the latest researches, was born May 4, 1653, at Padua. Here he attained such high renown as a keyed-instrument maker, that the Prince Ferdinand de' Medici, known as a patron of arts, and especially as a connoisseur of music, induced him to settle in Florence and enter his service as court maker of clavichords, spinets, and harpsichords, and to also serve as custodian of his collection of musical instruments. In the year 1711, in a newspaper published in Venice, the invention, hitherto considered impossible, of a *grave-cembalo col piano e forte*, was announced. It also stated that the lucky inventor was the paid and employed cymbalist of the Prince of Toscana — namely Bartolommeo Cristofori, and that he had already completed three



grand pianos of the usual size and quality. It was especially mentioned that in these new instruments it depended upon the strength with which the player touched the key to produce a weaker or stronger tone with all its gradations. Many musicians refused to pay the tribute due to this invention, because its tone was too weak and obtuse. The chief objection made to the new instrument was that one had to become accustomed to the manner of playing it even if expert on the other keyed instruments.

Cristofori solved three important problems, the first of which was to counteract the strain of thicker strings necessary to withstand the impact of the hammer. The second, allied to the first, was to compensate for the weakness caused by the opening between the tuning-pin block, technically "wrest-plank," and the sounding-board—imperative for the hammers to rise to the strings; while the third was the mechanical control of the rebound of the hammer from the strings—technically "escapement,"—so that the hammer should not block against the strings and prevent vibrations. All this he did, and more, for he invented the check, or movable rest, for the hammer-tail, the simplest expedient to preserve the position of the hammer for a repeated blow—technically "repetition."

Marius, doubtless, is the second equally independent inventor of a piano. In 1716 he presented to the Royal Academy in Paris the designs and descriptions of four different piano models.

In 1763, organist Christoph Gottlieb Schröter, in Nordhausen, published a description of a newly invented clavier, on which one could play loudly or

softly, according to the way the keys were touched. He said that he was led to this invention by the pantaleon of the renowned virtuoso, Hebenstreit, and that in 1717 he had attempted to produce a keyed instrument whose strings could be set in motion by means of beaters or hammers instead of the tangents, quills, or plectra formerly used, and that in 1721 he submitted two models to the court in Dresden. In one the hammers struck the strings from above, in the other from below; both were supplied with dampers so that the strings could be made to resound softly or loudly. The models met with the approval of the King, who ordered the construction of the one struck by hammers from below. The execution of this order was never completed, and when Schröter desired to leave Dresden he could not obtain possession of his models in spite of all his efforts. Schröter furthermore states that, without his knowledge and consent, his invention became known in Germany, and bad imitations thereof were made and called pianofortes. Agricola adds the following to the history of the piano: "Mr. Gottfried Silbermann made at first two of these pianos. The blessed chapelmaster, Johann Sebastian Bach, saw and played upon one of them, and while he praised its tone and even admired it, he found the fault that in its high notes it was too weak, and that it was too hard to play. Mr. Silbermann heard these complaints with ill grace, and was angry with Mr. Bach for a long time. But his own conscience finally told him that Mr. Bach's criticisms were correct, and he decided, it must be said to his glory, not to make any more of these

instruments, but to work hard to invent something to do away with the faults mentioned by Mr. Bach. On this he worked for many years, and when he showed one of these improved instruments to Mr. Bach, he received from him his utmost approval."

The greatest musicians of the age—Johann Sebastian Bach in 1737, and Mozart in 1777—had acknowledged the value of the invention of the piano, but still a long time elapsed before it assumed the rank due to it among the keyed instruments of that age. As in the history of music, so we can here plainly see the strife of progress against conservatism, the resistance of established rules to new principles. A musical critic in Leipsic writes in 1782: "In the harpsichord the heart cannot express itself; with it, no picture can be completely produced, as light and shadow cannot be expressed,—only a clearly defined sketch can be made. It is adapted either to bear or to carry away the stream of music,—in short, to flow on with it." "The pianoforte," he continues, "stands higher, especially one made by Frederici in Gera, or Stein in Augsburg. Here the heart can express itself, manifest its manifold feelings, and exhibit light and shadows. But it is deficient in shadings and minor attractions, so that it is adapted as an instrument for concerts and chamber music. The clavichord, however, stands highest of all, and, although on account of its nature it is excluded from the concert-hall, it is the companion of the recluse. Here I can reproduce the feelings of my heart, can shade, fully express, drive away, and melt away a tone through all its swellings." He closes his remarks as follows: "In order to judge a

virtuoso, one must listen to him while at the clavi-chord, not at the pianoforte, and least of all at the harpsichord."

The poet and musician, Christian Friederich Daniel Schubart, thus expresses himself: "The musical coloring cannot be executed on the piano in all its *nuances*, but the clavichord—this solitary, melancholy, and inexpressibly sweet instrument—if it is made by a master—is preferable to the harpsichord and pianoforte; through the pressure of the finger, through the swinging and vibrating of the strings, through the strong and soft touch of the hand, the increase and decrease of tone, the melting under the fingers of the player, the expiring trill of the *portamento*—in short, all expressions of feeling can be visibly manifested." We see that long after the general introduction and use of the piano, the clavichord was preferred.

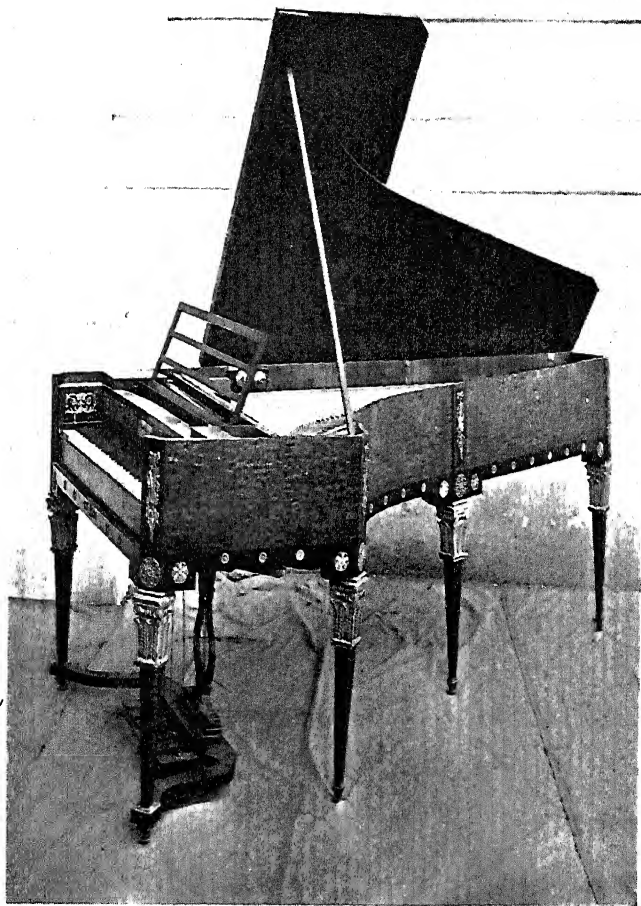
The pianofortes of Johann Andreas Stein, who died in 1792, in Augsburg, far surpassed those of other makers. When Mozart had become acquainted with these instruments, he selected them especially for his performances, and thereby brought them into public favor and the widest circulation. Stein's newly contrived piano-escapement appears to have charmed Mozart when in Augsburg in October, 1777. In a letter to his father he refers to the evenness of its touch, saying that "the action never blocks, and never fails to sound, as is sometimes the case with other pianos."

Mozart's concert grand in the *Mozarteum* at Salzburg is a small five-octave instrument with black natural keys and white sharps, said to have been

made by Anton Walter, in Vienna, who finally became Mozart's favorite maker. Walter's pianos were mere copies of Stein.

The Steins were a family of piano-makers and players, and consisted of the father, Johann Andreas, his two sons, Matthäus Andreas, Friedrich, and a daughter, Maria Anna, known as Nanette, who in 1794 married Streicher, and was really the most prominent of the group. Though Streicher ultimately succeeded to the business, which had been removed from Augsburg to Vienna, his name does not appear for several years in connection with it. The firm, as late as 1801, was "Geschwister Stein"; subsequently "Nanette Stein" appears as the maker's name on a grand piano existing as late as 1882 in Windsor Castle, the property of the Queen of England.

Nanette Streicher was a fine pianiste and piano-builder. She was a person of cultivation and refinement, and her name is closely connected with that of Beethoven. It is well known that she did much to help him in his domestic arrangements, lightened the burden of his housekeeping, and that she even looked after his bodily health. Thayer, in his work on Beethoven, says: "In May, Beethoven, on the advice of his medical men, went to Baden, whither he was followed by his friend Mrs. Streicher, who remained at Baden for the summer and took charge of his lodgings and clothes, which appear to have been in a deplorable state. On his return to Vienna the Streichers continued their friendly services, procured for him two good servants, and otherwise looked after his interests. These servants remained with



DECORATED CONCERT GRAND.

Made by Anton Walter in Vienna, about 1780.



him for a year or two, and this was probably the most comfortable time of the last half of Beethoven's life." Beethoven always showed a preference for the pianos made by Stein and his daughter Nanette. Thayer says that Beethoven, in 1791, when residing at Bonn, always used a Stein piano, and it is claimed by those who know the history of the grand made by Nanette Streicher, and which forms one of my collection, that it was furnished by the lady to her friend Beethoven for his concerts, and that during his many wanderings away from home Mrs. Streicher kept it exclusively at the disposal of the master whenever he felt like using it. In one of his many letters to Mrs. Streicher Beethoven says: "Perhaps you do not know, though I have not always had one of your pianos, that since 1809 I have invariably preferred yours."

On a theatre program of May 16, 1767, in London, we find the following in reference to the early use of the piano in London:

"End of Act I. Miss Brickler will sing a favorite song from *Judith*, accompanied by Mr. Dibdin on a new instrument called piano."

A year later, Johann Christian Bach played in a concert for the first time publicly on a piano. Clementi also used a piano in London in 1775.

Although professional musicians took the greatest interest in playing the pianoforte, it cannot be said that the art of pianoforte-playing was extensively adopted by the people at large. No doubt crowned heads and noblemen took some interest in performing on this instrument, but otherwise there were very few people who owned pianofortes. Therefore,



it is not surprising that such an industry as the manufacturing of pianofortes, considering the limited demand for them, was not followed to any great extent. The makers of such keyed instruments as the clavichord, harpsichord, and spinet were generally such persons as knew how to play them, namely organists, schoolmasters, monks and priests, organ-builders, lute and violin players, cabinet-makers, and geniuses of all kinds. Every player invented some scheme for building an instrument that suited his requirements and tastes. No certain rule or scale was followed in the construction of the instruments—everything was left to the good judgment and discretion of the maker. It was somewhat of a free art, and even a fascination, to build a clavichord, a harpsichord, spinet, or even a pianoforte. It is well known that every player had to string, tune, and regulate his own instrument, and for that reason these instruments were provided with small drawers or enclosures containing little rolls of brass or steel wire, and in which could be always found the tuning-hammer with the hook for turning a loop and for tuning and stringing up the instrument.

The history of pianoforte-making compares unfavorably with that of violin-making. In fact, the pianoforte first made its appearance when the violin under such makers as Stradivarius and others had attained its highest perfection. Later on, when instrumental music became more popular, and its effects were more keenly felt, and the people at large became interested in the playing of the pianoforte, a greater demand for this instrument was

created, and orders came in to these self-taught makers.

How dealers in pianofortes to-day must envy the pianoforte-makers of the good days of old when they consider that in those days the would-be purchaser had to look up the maker and court his pleasure!

He was compelled to sign a written contract whose terms sound droll. The time limited for the construction was from six to twelve months. The payments were generally so much cash, so many casks of wine, a certain amount of corn, wheat, and potatoes. Very often geese, chickens, and turkeys constituted some of the items of payment, and even a few cords of firewood might make up the balance. When the pianoforte was completed and ready to be delivered at the house of the impatient purchaser a general festival took place; the maker was the hero of the hour, and accompanied the piano, followed by his craftsmen and apprentices, if he had any.

The wagon which conveyed the precious burden was gaily decorated with wreaths and flowers, the horses were magnificently decked out, a band of music headed the procession, and after the wagon followed the proud maker, borne on the shoulders of his assistants, musicians, organists, schoolmasters, and dignitaries marching in the rear. At the place of destination the procession was received with greetings of welcome and shouts of joy. The pastor of the place said a prayer and blessed the new instrument and its maker. Then the mayor or the burgo-master of the place delivered an address dwelling

at great length upon the importance of the event to the whole community, and stating, perhaps, that the coming of such a new musical instrument would raise their place in the eyes of the surrounding country. Then followed speeches by the schoolmaster, doctor, druggist, and other dignitaries, and songs by the Männerchor of the place. Amidst the strains of the band the pianoforte was moved to its new home. A banquet and a dance closed the happy occasion.

This is a fair description of the pianoforte industry of Germany in the latter part of the eighteenth century and the first part of the nineteenth, though it must be added that there then existed a few pianoforte-makers who had already systematized their business, and who managed small factories. As the makers were compelled to manufacture every article used in the instrument, and in default of machinery had to make everything by hand, it took a long time to turn out an instrument.

The then prevailing polyphonic school was not sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the player of the newly invented pianoforte. A new style was to be cultivated, one in conformity with the new instrument, possessing greater power than the clavi-chord, besides having dynamic qualities so different from the latter, in addition to its greatest capacity, namely, that of enabling the performer to play softly and loudly according to his will. The monophonic style was to be cultivated; a melodic form was demanded by the people in their steady advancement with the new instrument. Its apostle and representative was found in C. P. Emanuel Bach, one of

Sebastian Bach's sons. His style was elegant and pleasing. He was followed by Joseph Haydn, who, endowed with a musical nature, emphasized the new style of pianoforte playing. Owing to the fact that improvements were continually added to the pianoforte, in course of time the instrument reached a higher state of perfection. The pianofortes of Johann Andreas Stein, of Augsburg, Germany, were of great influence on the previously prevailing style of pianoforte playing, and the sonatas and concertos of Mozart, composed for this instrument, clearly exhibit the great advance of pianoforte building. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the Vienna school of piano-building first became prominent through the son and daughter of said Stein, who had moved their workshop from Augsburg to Vienna, where Nanette Stein became a piano-builder in company with Streicher, her husband. The improvement of the pianoforte goes hand in hand with the compositions of the great Beethoven, who at this time embellished his new forms of concertos and sonatas with matchless beauty from the inspirations of his great genius. His compositions surmounted all the then existing obstacles, and with the wings of an eagle he spread his music over the universe. In 1827, the mighty genius of Beethoven rested from its labors forever. His grand symphonies, his overtures, an opera—*Fidelio*, a wealth of trios, quartets, quintets, sextets, and septets—remain an everlasting monument of this great man. His pianoforte concertos and sonatas will ever testify to his love and devotion for that instrument.

The master who has reached the highest pinnacle

of pianoforte composition beckons the pianoforte-maker to march on to his mission, to improve his instrument, so that when the artist touches its keys, the hammers may touch the strings with tenderness, and the divine spirit of the immortal composer breathe forth, and that the harp of the nineteenth century with its lyric strains may inspire all mankind with its heavenly harmonies.

Just as music is the youngest and noblest of the fine arts, the pianoforte is also the latest of the grand family of musical instruments; and as the love for music progresses, the art of pianoforte-building will steadily move forward, and its onward march will aid mankind in acquiring a higher, deeper, and still more glorious knowledge of the noblest and greatest of all arts—the divine art of music.





## CHAPTER XIII

Steinertone.

HAVING thus strengthened my conviction by my researches and lectures, I was led to think of some mechanism that could be connected with a keyboard, by which I could intone a string by means of a hammer. The tone-production of the clavichord, I knew, was obtained by a little bit of brass fastened to the back of the key, and which, when the key was pressed down, struck the string, producing a tone. This tangent remained stationary on the string, forming a bridge, as long as the key was held down, and as the string was loosely drawn over the sounding-board and made of thin brass wire, it was subject to a tremulous vibration, obtained by a movement of the finger like that in which the violinist indulges when pressing down the string upon the finger-board of his violin. This tone-production I found to be of the most intimate and soul-inspiring nature, capable of expressing the deepest emotions inherent in the human heart, but too soft, too tender, too ethereal, and capable of appealing only to the select few.

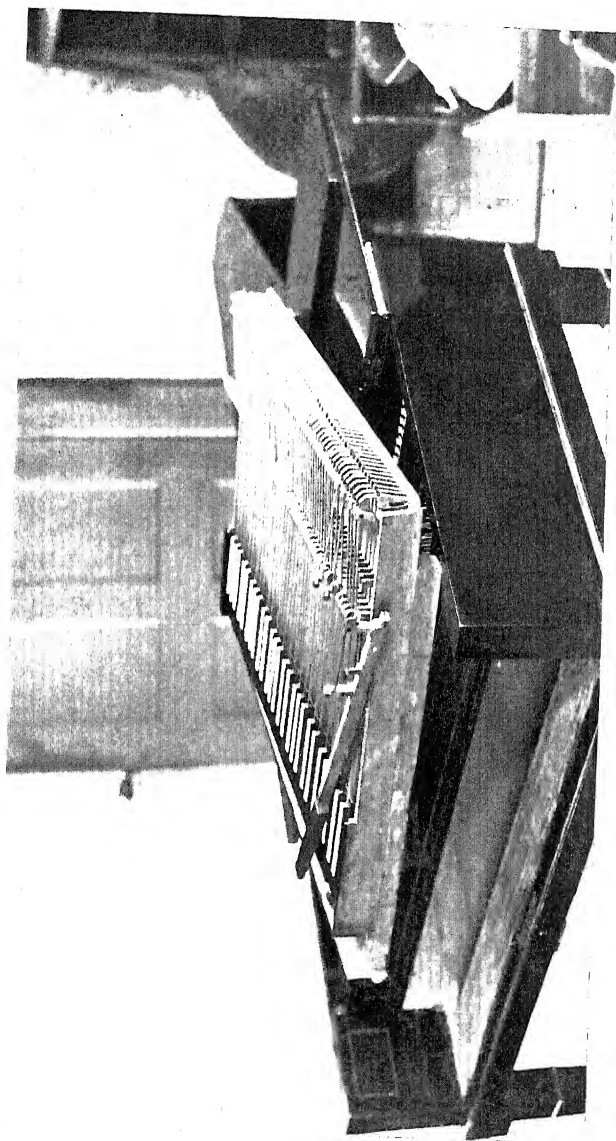
The spinet and the harpsichord have the same

sounding-board as is found in the clavichord, but with a string of greater tension. It is plucked by means of a goose-quill fastened to a jack and resting upon the end of a key, and produces an entirely different tone-color, which, while it is louder, more brilliant in timbre than the clavichord, it is devoid of the expression of that sweet-voiced little instrument.

The third tone-production consists in connecting a mechanism with the key that hurls a hammer towards a tightly drawn string; but it also retains a sounding-board similar to the clavichord. This tone-color differs from that of the quill by being able to give two strokes which vary in their dynamics—viz., soft and loud, and it is called the hammer-clavier, or the piano e forte.

All tone-productions through keyboards during the last one hundred and fifty years have been obtained by means of hammers, and it was the hammer that I finally chose to utilize as a means of tone-production, and which I determined should serve me in enlarging its limitations. I therefore constructed a mechanism which resembles greatly the natural formation of the human arm and hand, which could influence the hammer and control its strokes when meeting the string, the same as the violinist holds and controls his bow, and through this vibratory motion touches the string and draws out tones that are closely related to those obtained by means of the tangent of the clavichord.

When I had developed this mechanism to a certain state of perfection, I discovered that the tonal capacity or the vibrating power of a sounding-board,



**ACTION OF GRAND PIANO.**

Built after the model of Johann Andreas Stein of Augsburg. A facsimile of Mozart's Grand at the Mozarteum, Salzburg.  
Five octaves. Two knee-pedals.





which usually serves as the tone resonator to the musical instrument called a pianoforte, and which contains a number of tightly drawn steel strings, was exceedingly pregnant with vibrating power, and far superior in this direction to the sounding-board of guitars and mandolins, and especially to the curved-belly sounding-board found in the various instruments that belong to the violin tribe. This discovery still further convinced me that my search was in the right direction for finding rich tones, if only properly produced. I also found that the blows given to the strings of a pianoforte, on account of its crude mechanism, are too violent. They lack elasticity, and possess brute force. These blows differ greatly from the sensitiveness of the sounding-board, and are therefore antagonistic to it, and in consequence create noises and discordant and unrelated overtones. The pianoforte is essentially an instrument of percussion, and is naturally subject to the impact of a hammer stroke towards the string, and this in itself diminishes its musical value.

I was aware of the fact that the very elements which were contained in the primitive invention of Cristofori in 1710 are yet indisputably represented in the mechanism that controls the hammer which deals out the blows upon the string, and that no one has ever dared to change these dynamics obtained by such a mechanism. Being therefore surrounded by it and by the influences which were bearing upon me as to another tone-production, which is also subject to the workings of a mechanism that controls a hammer in striking a string, I was bold enough to discard the old Cristofori system

*in toto*, to strike out in a new direction which I hoped would bring out the hidden powers of the sounding-board in all their wealth of color.

This mechanism consists of a system of leverages, and is quite free from all the accessories of springs, as found in the old action. I was also guided by the natural movements of the wrist, hand, and fingers, which move simply by will-power and without any obstruction. Having thus refined my hammer stroke, the inevitable thump which is so disagreeable to the ear, and therefore so objectionable to the musical mind, disappeared, and a more delicate rhythm, which brought the musical work closer to such rhythms as lie in the sphere of other instruments, was developed; while by the softest impact of the hammer upon the string a most enchanting pianissimo could be obtained.

The introduction of the hammer-release by Cristofori, which has been piously and reverently retained as a landmark, and which it has ever been looked upon by the pianoforte-builders as a heresy to remove, I took upon myself not only to remove but to cremate, and thus obtained an authoritative control over my hammer. In thus gaining different tone-colors by means of different strokes and an unbroken control over the hammer through my new mechanism, I found that that instrument which Cristofori was pleased to call "*piano e forte*" was transformed into another instrument, which possessed not only the inexpressible sweetness of the clavi-chord and the rhythmical tone-production of the hammer-clavier or pianoforte, but a musical instrument that, when compared with those instruments

that live in the domain of the orchestra, stands unique as to its usefulness and imitative power in giving tone-colorings which strikingly resemble the 'cello, clarionet, French horn, bassoon, and many others, when its keyboard serves the intelligent and talented musician as a means of expression.

To call the instrument containing my new method of tone-production still a pianoforte would hardly be proper, and in order to distinguish it from the latter instrument I have called it the Steinertone. The introduction of the Steinertone to the musical world should form a new era in the building of a keyed instrument which has steel strings; and when I look back upon the many compositions that were given to the early family of keyed instruments, such as clavichord, harpsichord, hammer-clavier, and pianoforte, and glance upon the usefulness they possessed in the realm of music and in the lives of musicians, the power they wielded upon the human mind and upon the emotions which control the thought of us all, I feel that the cultivation of that instrument has not been in vain; that through its influence society has been refined and elevated, and that no branch of the fine arts has entered closer into the home circle than have the keyed instruments, on account of their ingenious construction, for every man, woman, and child can form his or her own orchestra.

For this reason, I feel that the feeble efforts which I have made must add some degree of happiness to the many who liberally contributed to my support when I furnished them with the pianoforte. In fact, I felt under obligation to the musical world to give them freely of that which a Higher Power may have

ordained to impart to them through me; to add to the happiness of humanity and to increase the love and devotion that makes the musician everywhere such a happy being; to aid him in a limited degree, so as to enable him to express his thoughts, his joys, his griefs, and his sorrows just as truthfully, and more free from physical exertion than upon the instrument that has been so faithful to him, though not faultless.

If the claims I make and the responses from the musical world are in harmony with my ideal, I can safely say that I have lived a happy and useful life, and one that must teach that life is only sweet when it is devoted to the service of others.





## In Memoriam

“We are born for a higher destiny than that of earth ; there is a realm where the rainbow never fades, where the stars will be spread before us like islands that slumber on the ocean, and where the beings that pass before us like shadows will stay in our presence forever.”

WE are taught that we must graciously accept the adversities that meet us in the paths of life when everything should point towards happiness. It cannot be denied that much self-denial must be practised when we are called upon to face the inevitable amidst our joys and successes. This has come home to me, as for seventeen years I have toiled along the rugged path of life, meeting on the road much that offered resistance to my endeavor to reach such ideals as I looked upon as worthy of possessing. I have therefore to mention that a time came in my life when the good fairy could not touch with her magic wand and transform what lay before me into happiness and good fortune. I refer to the early germs of a malady which stole over my beloved wife, and silently and stealthily, but nevertheless effectively, implanted in her constitution the primary symptoms of a disease known as paralysis agitans, a disease that is inexplicable to

the physician in its mysterious nature, a disease that defies scientific research and its treatment.

When this misfortune came to our happy home-circle and planted its fangs in my wife, much of that sunshine that had always given us comfort, cheer, and warmth became shadowed. In this hour of distress, however, the sweet nature of my unfortunate wife brightened, and she, by her patient and gentle disposition, helped to dispel the cloud across the sun. With a silent and cheerful acceptance of her fate, she fought the disease through the slow stages of development, until at the end of seventeen years of intense suffering, without one murmur, she yielded to the insidious nature of the dread malady. My wife and the affectionate mother of nine children died January 15, 1899. The loss of Mrs. Steinert brought grief and sorrow to our home, and all the world seemed to share our mourning as we laid her away. The sweet home-circle was broken; and our hearts, which were sad and heavy, bled afresh when, on February 10th of the same year, Edward, in the flower of his manhood—for he was only thirty-four—went to join his mother.

To the taking away of these beloved ones, I inscribe this In Memoriam, while I shed a tear to their memory.





MRS. CAROLINE DREYFUSS STEINERT.







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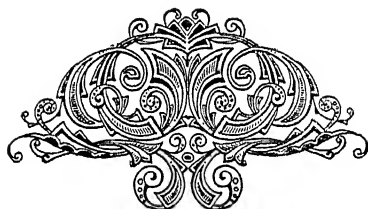
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